



Technical University Munich

Chair of Landscape Architecture and Transformation  
Technical University of Munich  
TUM School of Engineering and Design  
Prof. Dr. sc. ETH Zürich Udo Weilacher

# Sewing the Seeds to Reconciliation

Inclusive design in the process of balancing the narrative and decolonizing settler cities

Master's Thesis at the Chair of Landscape Architecture and Transformation  
Technical University of Munich  
Summer Term Semester 2022

Carling Sioui B. Sc

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“Indigenous Designers are a bridge between Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners. Being this bridge, we are discovering that this is the heart of what we do.”

~ Shaun Vincent



## Author's Note

Being indigenous with no community in an urban setting is similar to being an unlit candle, wandering around, sometimes not knowing why it feels so dull. The thing is, the other candles are there, they exist, they burn, but they are hidden and so spread out that it is often difficult to find them in places designed for millions of others. Spaces of encounter are like the birthday cakes that candles can find each other on, light each other up and burn together. The best part is, you only need 1 lit candle to catalyse the whole and create a bright burning community.

I lived most of my life on the island of Tiohtià:ke, far from my community. My father moved there in the 1980s, at about 18 years old, with one friend who eventually went back to Wendake. He did not know any other Indigenous people in the city and lived his adulthood in a system that aimed to erase Indigenous people. He also lived through an event in 1990 called the Oka Crisis in the greater Montreal area, where tensions between the Kanehsatake people and the city of Oka, along with the solidarity of Kahnawake, created almost three months of uproar and violence against Indigenous People. My father hasn't told me about it himself, but the testimonies of many of his generation, and footage of those days explain what a difficult time it was for them. It wasn't considered a good place or time to be Indigenous. It was difficult to find services and community support. Fortunately, four decades later, there are over 50 organisations on Tiohtià:ke, but their visibility is still low. In testimonies of the participants of this research, some were unhoused for some time, some lived on the island for a decade before meeting another Indigenous person, and some have lived most of their lives with no close connection to their community or culture. None of this is from lack of will or effort on their parts.

The participants of this research all expressed a desire for more opportunities of encounter and of education within the city's fabric. Passing down knowledge and practicing their culture often takes place in relationship with the landscape, with the natural elements it consists of. This is where stories are told about their past and present, and where community gatherings and ceremonies often take place. They expressed this need for visibility and acknowledgement that would help them feel welcome and respected.

I myself have never felt like my Indigeneity was welcome or celebrated in the urban fabric of the city, and I knew intuitively that I wasn't alone in this feeling. This thesis is my way of connecting with my culture, home and spirit, and those of the diverse people who make up the urban Indigenous community of the island. Finally, it was my way of exploring and celebrating the many ways in which Indigenous design is good for everyone, no matter which background or culture.

## Abstrakt

Geschichten sind in unserem täglichen Umfeld allgegenwärtig. Die Städte, in denen wir leben, erzählen uns die Geschichten der Menschen, die sie gebaut haben, von Zeiten der Not und wertvollen Erinnerungen. Was uns nicht immer klar ist, ist, wie tief diese Geschichten gehen und wie wirkungsvoll architektonische Entscheidungen sind, wenn es darum geht, Ideale und Erzählungen durch ihre Entwürfe zu zementieren. All diese Entscheidungen beruhen auf einer Reihe von Werten, die dann in die Realität übertragen werden und jedes einzelne Wesen betreffen, das mit diesen Kreationen in Kontakt kommt.

Kolonialismus ist ein Werkzeug, das seit Jahrhunderten weltweit eingesetzt wird, um eine einzige Erzählung voranzutreiben und die der Kolonisierten auszulöschen. Dies ist besonders sichtbar in den Landschaften, die durch die Ankunft von Siedlern auf Ländereien verwandelt wurden, die über Jahrtausende von Menschen mit unterschiedlichen Wertevorstellungen und Idealen bewohnt wurden. Was der eine als heilige Verbindung zu den Vorfahren sieht, sieht der andere als Rohmaterial für ein Boot. Was der eine als ein reiches Zuhause voller Leben, Essen, Kultur und Geschichte sieht, sieht ein anderer als Hindernis für seine Vorstellung von einem Zuhause, das mit denselben Dingen gefüllt ist. Wenn also einer alle Elemente, die aus dem Zuhause eines anderen bestanden, abholt und entfernt, wird dem anderen sein Wert als Mitglied dieser Welt verweigert.

Dies ist eine Reihe von Geschichten, die untersucht, wie die koloniale Erzählung die Landschaft, Erfahrungen und Beziehungen der Ureinwohner von Montreal, Kanada, beeinflusst hat. Darüber hinaus zeigt es, wie diese Beziehungen im Mittelpunkt unserer Arbeit stehen, um diese Erzählung zu ändern, indem wir bessere Räume schaffen, die jedes Mitglied seiner Gesellschaft anerkennen und respektieren.

Diese Diplomarbeit beginnt mit der Analyse, wie die kanadische Stadtlandschaft zu dem Narrativ geworden ist, das sie heute hat. Anschließend werden die Erfahrungen mit indigenen und nicht-indigenen Standpunkten durch Interviews, Umfragen und partizipative Workshops bewertet. Dadurch wird auch eine Grundlage indigener Werte und Prinzipien geschaffen und verwendet, um aufzuzeigen, wie urbane Räume in Montreal diese Erzählungen verstärken. Schließlich wird die Skala der Prinzipien verwendet, um indigene geführte Designs zu demonstrieren und die Möglichkeiten für eine ausgewogenere und integrativere Erzählung zu demonstrieren. Als Landschaftsarchitekten stehen wir in der Verantwortung, mit Verstand und ganzheitlichem Blick bewusste Entscheidungen zu treffen, die alle gemeinsam nach vorne bringen.

## Abstract

Stories are omnipresent in our daily environments. The cities that we live in tell us the stories of the people who built them, of times of hardship, and memories that are considered of value. What we don't always realize is how deep these stories go, and how impactful architectural choices are in cementing ideals and narratives through their designs. All of these choices stem from a set of values that are then transferred into reality, affecting every single being that comes in contact with these creations.

Colonialism is a tool has been used worldwide for centuries to push forward a single narrative and erase that of those who were colonized. This is especially visible in the landscapes that were transformed by the arrival of settlers onto lands that were occupied by people with different sets of values and ideals for millennia. What one sees as a sacred connection to ancestors, another sees as raw material for a boat. What one sees as a rich home, filled with life, food, culture and history, another sees as an obstacle to their idea of a home filled with those same things. So, when one cuts down and removes all of the elements that consisted of another's home, the other is then denied their value as a member of this world.

This is a series of stories that explores the ways that the colonial narrative has impacted the landscape, experiences and relationships of the Indigenous People of Montreal, Canada. Moreover, it demonstrates how these relationships are at the core of how we work to change that narrative, by creating better spaces that acknowledge and respect every member of its society.

This thesis begins by analyzing how the Canadian urban landscape has reached the narrative is has today. It follows by assessing the experiences of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous points of view through interviews, surveys and participatory workshops. Through this, a basis of Indigenous values and principles is also created and used to demonstrate the ways that urban spaces in Montreal enhance these narratives. Finally, the scale of principles is used to demonstrate Indigenous led designs, demonstrating the possibilities for a more balanced and inclusive narrative. As landscape architects, we have a responsibility to make conscious decisions with a good mind and a holistic view that will bring everyone forward together.

“Reconciliation from a non-Indigenous perspective is not, I believe, to make you feel guilty. It's to invite you to go on a journey of learning, and to do some self-reflection. The process is not to knock you down; it's to lift us all up. But you have to be open to that.”<sup>1</sup>

- Chris Grosset, NVision

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<sup>1</sup> Logan, K. 2021



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## Baking the Dough Before it Turns

Ignorance is like sourdough: leave it, and it will grow. This might not seem problematic at first, because ignorance is not synonym to stupidity. It does not negate knowledgeability, but for that, it must be baked. Leave that dough for too long, however, and it will turn to mold. Then it is no longer remediable.

The colonization of Canada is in some way like sourdough. The development of this country has been shared only in part. Many aspects have been put aside, and information withheld, allowing inequality and oppression over its original inhabitants to continue to this day. The international population is not generally aware of the less attractive aspects of Canada. In fact, even most Canadians are not aware of the oppressive actions its government has committed and continues to commit daily. It is possible to say that in the timeline of things, the dough has grown and is approaching its turning point. Knowledge is the heat of the oven. It is the fire that transforms this dough into something edible, into food, into the fuel that pushes us towards a different type of growth, a sustainable one.

When thinking of the timeline of the Indigenous people of Canada, many will look to the past, because this is what has been taught in schools for the last century. To add to this, the percentage of the Indigenous population of Canada in 2021 was only nearing 5%, and in 2016, 40% of status First Nations people lived on reserves, located in remote areas.<sup>1</sup> This doesn't include Inuit, Métis and all of the non-status Indigenous people of the country. Briefly put, they are practically invisible, especially in urban areas. They are however still present, growing, and relevant. They are still alive, and they represent resilience, along with over 15,000 years of culture, knowledge, and contribution, which is why it is important to create spaces that represent, celebrate, and invite these Peoples and their cultures in and into the public space.

Representation matters because it is a form of acknowledgement and respect. It creates visibility and sense of belonging. Moreover, it is the sharing of knowledge and the creation of a narrative for people to follow. For too long, the narrative of Indigenous Peoples has been that of the past, of death, trauma, suffering and especially of shrinking. Today, the tide is turning, the population is growing, the culture flourishing, the knowledge returning, and it is important to encourage it, to feed it and to change the narrative.

Finally, giving a voice to the ones who have been silenced for centuries is crucial in changing the narrative. Every story has multiple sides. We have been listening to only one of them and it is time to hear the others, of those who made this land thrive for millennia. One of the most prevalent concepts shared by the diverse Indigenous cultures of Canada is that of non-hierarchy. This places all beings at the same level of importance and value.<sup>2</sup> It means that we all play a role in the cycles that we are born into. This concept is relevant in all aspects of life, including the projects that we contribute to. Similarly, in Western practices, there is that of participatory methods. This project aims to contribute to changing the narrative of Indigenous Peoples by combining Western and Indigenous

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada. A snapshot: Status First Nations people in Canada. StatCan. (2016) <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/41-20-0002/412000022021001-eng.htm> Consulted in 01.2022

<sup>2</sup> INRS Participant group 2021

knowledge and methods in a way that enhances the visibility and value of Indigenous Peoples, their experiences and their strengths. In other words, it is baking the dough before it turns.

The city of Montreal is also known as Tiohtià:ke in Kanien'kehá, and Mooniyang in Anishinaabemowin. The Kanien'kehá:ka are the "recognized stewards" of this land "and the Anishinaabeg peoples have strong historical ties to the area."<sup>3</sup> Today they are both present on and around the island, along with individuals of many other Indigenous nations of the continent. The Indigenous community of Montreal has been growing exponentially for the past two decades,<sup>4</sup> and, although the nations have their own individual cultures and practices, there exist certain elements that ring true to most. This includes relationship to the land, notions of cycles, community, and resilience, according to the testimonies of the participants of this research.

What we design is a direct reflection of our values and our realities. Each of us live in different, unique realities, which is why it is important to check in with the realities of those who will be the most affected by our interventions and create a common vision that works as well as possible with them. This is why representation matters and why it is so important to look critically at what is present, what narratives are brought forward, how they impact people and the landscape, and how they can evolve.

This thesis explores the realities of Indigenous people in an urban setting through participatory workshops. It then reflects on examples of public space design in Montreal, what messages they convey, and which values are represented in these choices, on a scale of compatibility with the values of the research group. Through this it demonstrates the colonial narrative that fills the city and how it impacts Indigenous people and their experience in relation to it. Moreover, examples of Indigenous placemaking are brought forth, with a reflection of which values and functions activate these spaces, and how they can be utilized to further develop a respectful and culturally safe urban landscape for all. Finally, a comparison of these spaces is made to create a more holistic idea of what works and doesn't work towards creating a more balanced narrative. An extra chapter was added with the beginnings of an application of these values in a park of the city of Montreal.

"The biggest force to say that we are not a forgotten identity is to put education and to [dedicate] a clear block of our history so that not only the people that are non-native but that are native that can live in this pride and within this force and this whole link with the nation. Then we can work together. Then we can have reparations. Then we can move passed the colonialism. Then, maybe, the native people will have a certain pride, and force and voice in the country."

- Wapikoni Mobile  
Où Sont Tes Plumes?

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3 McGill. Learn about the Land and Peoples of Tiohtià:ke / Montreal. McGill Indigenous Initiatives. <https://www.mcgill.ca/indigenous/land-and-peoples/learn-about-land-and-peoples-tiohtiake-montreal> (2022)

4 Guimont-Marceau, S. *Peuples autochtones et politiques*. Chapter 11 Territoires urbains et citoyenenneté. p.241-242 (2020)

A large, white, 3D-style number '1' is positioned on the right side of the image. The background is a black and white photograph of a river, likely the Rivière des Prairies, with dense foliage in the foreground on the left and a cloudy sky in the background.

# 1

## ‘Land Back’: Why and How?

North America is a continent that has been colonized by European settlers and is now the home of people from many countries around the world. A demographic, however, has been pushed aside in order to make all of this possible: the hundreds of Indigenous Nations that have been there and taken care of the land since time immemorial. This chapter dives into the many aspects since settler arrivals that have created a landscape of dominance and exclusion of Indigenous Peoples, specifically in the territory known today as the country of Canada. It begins with an initiation to terms that are key to understanding the themes of the thesis. It then describes peoples, events and actions that contextualize the narrative that most are atuned to, and the beginning of the shift. Finally, it introduces the main area of study, the province of Quebec, and the city of Montreal, along with the Indigenous Nations in relation to them.

## 1.1 Key Terminology

### Indigenous Peoples

This is the official definition and description of Indigenous Peoples from the Canadian encyclopedia:

“Indigenous Peoples are the original inhabitants of the land that is now Canada. Inuit and First Nations history extends well before the arrival of Europeans in Canada, while Métis emerged as a distinct culture after intermarriage between European settlers and First Nations people. Indigenous people were essential to the development of early Canada, but suffered massive population declines due to the arrival of European disease. In addition, though they were often military allies, they faced persecution at the hands of colonial governments in the form of displacement, starvation, land seizure and cultural genocide through residential schools and destructive legislation. Indigenous people live throughout Canada and continue to strive to reinvigorate traditional culture and ways of life.”<sup>5</sup>

After conversations with the participatory group, the members of Native Montreal and members of Salon Uatik, some important themes that came up are that the Indigenous Peoples of the land known as North America have been there since time immemorial. They are contemporary people with traditional knowledge and ways that are not savage, or primitive. Finally, they are present, relevant and resilient. It should be noted that Native Land goes across the whole of North America, and that the borders now known as Canada, the United States of America and Mexico, were not present before colonization.

### Indigenous Diversity

The Indigenous Peoples of North America do not have one single culture, although most share common values, such as a close relationship to the land and the referral to North America as Turtle Island. Today, “there are more than 630 First Nation communities in Canada, which represent more than 50 Nations and 50 Indigenous languages.”<sup>6</sup> They are currently recognized in three main groups, the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. The territory of the province of Quebec is home to 10 First Nations, and many Inuit communities. It is important to not put all Indigenous People into one definition, as each nation has their own language and culture. Many nations also hold commonly known names that were given to them by colonials without consent. For example, “ ‘Huron’ was a nickname given to the Wendat by the French, meaning ‘boar’s head’ from the hairstyle of Huron men, or ‘lout’ and ‘ruffian’ in old French”.<sup>7</sup> There is a current movement to move towards the original names of the communities and nations, as many of the colonially given names come from disrespectful and inaccurate ideas that reflect poorly on these groups.<sup>8</sup> It is important to recognize the diversity of these cultures and honour them in respectful ways.

<sup>5</sup> Historica Canada. *Indigenous Peoples*. *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. (n.d) <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/collection/aboriginal-peoples>

<sup>6</sup> Government of Canada, *Indigenous Peoples and Communities*. Government of Canada (2021) <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100013785/1529102490303>

<sup>7</sup> C.E. Heidenreich. *Huron-Wendat*. (2011). *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. <https://thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/huron>

<sup>8</sup> Conversations with Native Montreal organization, Salon Uatik and the participatory group at INRS

## Reserves

“The reserve system is governed by the Indian Act and relates to First Nations bands and people, referred to in a legal context as Indians. Inuit and Métis people normally do not live on reserves, though many live in communities that are governed by land claims or self-government agreements.

Under the Indian Act, an Indian Reserve is land held by the Crown ‘for the use and benefit of the respective bands for which they were set apart’ under treaties or other agreements. Many First Nations (Indian Bands) include several separate portions of land as their reserve. Only those with Registered Indian status (i.e., Status Indians), may ‘own’ land on a reserve, though such ownership remains at the discretion of the federal government, and does not entail full legal possession. Certificates of Possession, often referred to as CPs, convey ‘ownership’ of reserve lands to their holders but they lack the legal status of deeds. Furthermore, not all bands have reserves.”<sup>9</sup>

What this means is that creation of reserves was in the goal of separating Indigenous People from non-Indigenous people, and limiting their area of impact. They are given a right to self-govern on a specified area of land, and live in their own way, but do not own the land that they are on. This can be interpreted as giving the Canadian government the power to make changes to the territory if they wish, although they cannot decide how to govern the people. Consequently, this has led to many broken treaties which will be further explained in sub-chapter 1.3.

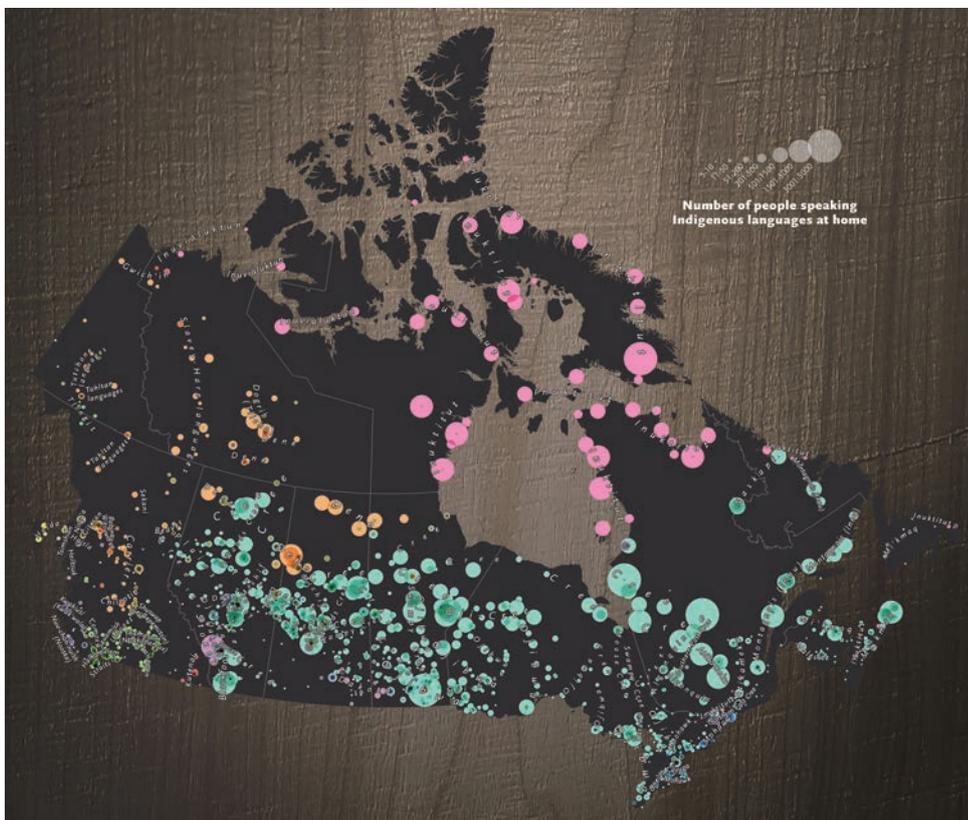


Fig.2 Mapping Indigenous Languages in Canada.  
N.Walker. 2017

<sup>9</sup> McCue, H.A. *Reserves*. The Canadian Encyclopedia. (2011, May 31) <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/aboriginal-reserves>

## Land Back

The following passage is a well-rounded explanation on the concept of Land Back by the David Suzuki foundation. Moreover, it addresses the actions that made Land Back a necessary movement in the quest of reconciliation:

“Land Back is an Indigenous-led movement with a rich and complex meaning. In the words of Isaac Murdoch, ‘Land Back is people returning back and finding their place in those systems of life.’ According to journalist and Canada Council for the Arts chair Jesse Wentz, Land Back is ‘about the decision-making power. It’s about self-determination for our Peoples here that should include some access to the territories and resources in a more equitable fashion, and for us to have control over how that actually looks.’<sup>10</sup>

Systems of land governance under our current provincial and federal governments not only exclude Indigenous Peoples from decision-making tables where choices about land use are made, they also fail to set limits for industrial activities and development, driving wildlife decline and ecosystem degradation.

The David Suzuki Foundation believes that land governance in Canada must change to recognize and uphold Indigenous rights and responsibilities, and to restore nature’s once abundant ecosystems.<sup>11</sup>

## Reconciliation

“In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) defined reconciliation as the process of ‘establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country.’ The TRC went on to say that in order for reconciliation to happen in Canada, ‘there has to be awareness of the past, an acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour.’<sup>12</sup>

This definition as seen in the Canadian encyclopaedia, omits a strong detail that has been discussed in the sharing circles of this research project. The participants spoke about the idea that reconciliation cannot happen until reparations are made and balance is restored. What is happening in Canada is not a conflict between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Peoples. It’s on-going oppression by the Canadian Government unto Indigenous Peoples of the country. In order to have reconciliation, the two parties must be equal, but this is not the case in 2022. Therefore, reconciliation is a process that begins with reparations and restoration of equality before it can be true and honourable.<sup>13</sup>

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10 David Suzuki Foundation, *What Is Land Back?* David Suzuki Foundation. (n.d)<https://david-suzuki.org/what-you-can-do/what-is-land-back/#:~:text=Land%20Back%20is%20an%20Indigenous,about%20the%20decision%2Dmaking%20power>.

11 David Suzuki Foundation

12 Angela Sterritt, *Reconciliation in Canada*. The Canadian Encyclopedia. (2020) <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/reconciliation-in-canada#:~:text=In%20Canada%2C%20the%20process%20of,ongoing%20effects%20on%20Indigenous%20peoples>.

13 Discussions with the INRS participatory group

## Decolonization

“Decolonization is about ‘cultural, psychological, and economic freedom’ for Indigenous people with the goal of achieving Indigenous sovereignty — the right and ability of Indigenous people to practice self-determination over their land, cultures, and political and economic systems. Colonialism is a historical and ongoing global project where settlers continue to occupy land, dictate social, political, and economic systems, and exploit Indigenous people and their resources. It is a global endeavor.”<sup>14</sup>

“Decolonization is work that belongs to all of us, everywhere. It asks us to think about our relationship with Indigenous lands that colonizers have unjustly claimed, re-defined and repurposed all over the world. It asks us to embrace responsibility as opposed to accepting fault. Lastly, decolonization is a path forward to creating systems which are just and equitable, addressing inequality through education, dialogue, communication, and action.”<sup>15</sup>

## Placekeeping VS Placemaking

Placemaking is a concept that “inspires people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of every community. Strengthening the connection between people and the places they share, placemaking refers to a collaborative process by which we can shape our public realm in order to maximize shared value. More than just promoting better urban design, placemaking facilitates creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution.”<sup>16</sup>

Placekeeping on the other hand “is about engaging the residents who already live in a space and allowing them to preserve the stories and culture of where they live.”<sup>17</sup> It puts more emphasis on the preservation of already existing cultures in the space. Kanien’kehá:ka architect Mattew Hickey explains that it’s “an approach to city building that prioritizes ecological, historical and cultural relationships in the care of ‘place’.”<sup>18</sup>

In this sense, placekeeping is an appropriate term for the case of Indigenous representation, because the cultures and people already exist within the space. It is the design of the space that doesn’t reflect them, which deserves to be changed.

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14 Belfi, E. & Sandiford, N., *Decolonization Series Part 1: Exploring Decolonization*. In S. Brandauer and E. Hartman (Eds.). *Interdependence: Global Solidarity and Local Actions*. The Community-based Global Learning Collaborative. <http://globalsolidaritylocalaction.sites.haverford.edu/what-is-decolonization-why-is-it-important/>

15 Idem

16 Project for Public Spaces. *What is Placemaking? Project for Public Spaces*. (2007) <https://www.pps.org/article/what-is-placemaking>

17 Project for Public Spaces (2007)

18 Evergreen, *Through an Indigenous Lens: A Shift From Placemaking to Placekeeping*. (2022) Evergreen. <https://www.evergreen.ca/blog/entry/through-an-indigenous-lens-a-shift-from-placemaking-to-placekeeping/>

## 1.2 Assumption, misconception and misinformation

When thinking of Indigenous Peoples, due to the colonial rhetoric and practices in the last five centuries, there are preconceived ideas and images that will come up. These are in many ways biases and stereotypes, because they are not factual and often reflect a narrative that impacts these communities in a negative way, stunting the creation of good relationships and good quality of life. The two following concepts are especially relevant in landscape architecture, as they influence the inner-narrative of the designer and consequently the design and outer-narrative, further perpetuating the colonial cycle of ignorance and erasure.

### Temporality

It is often assumed that Indigenous People are beings of the past, and that they are no longer present or relevant in the contemporary society. This is false. This is due to the continuous efforts of erasure in the education systems, in the media and in politics. Indigenous people are present, resilient, and growing. According to a 2018 publication by Statistics Canada: “Indigenous peoples are the fastest growing population in Canada, with a population that grew by 42.5% between 2006 and 2016.”<sup>19</sup>

Noting this is important because the rhetoric that is so often repeated is that indigenous people are only relevant in conversations about the past or in historical representations, which is harmful in that it diminishes their current voices and invalidates their current practices, cultures, and challenges. This applies to design especially when it comes to justifying an Indigenous themed concept in the public space, because the only time that indigeneity seems to be relevant is when there are archeological findings.<sup>20</sup> Putting indigenous themes and values exclusively in archeologically based designs is denying the contemporary relevance of Indigenous Peoples and is participating in erasure and colonization. Finally, contemporary Indigenous designs are just as relevant and Indigenous as traditional ones. It is therefore an aspect to be aware of and sensitive to in future designs.

**“The problem is that it comes from a good intention and an interest, but an interest where we are objectified like folkloric objects”**

**- Wapikoni Mobile,  
Où Sont Tes Plumes?**

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<sup>19</sup> Government of Canada. *Annual Report to Parliament. Government of Canada.* (2020) Government of Canada <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1602010609492/1602010631711>

<sup>20</sup> Conversations with Landscape Architects and Indigenous people in Montreal (2022)

## Homelessness

The greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness explains the following: “Indigenous experiences of homelessness can be directly correlated to the ongoing impacts of colonization, including Residential Schools, the Sixties Scoop, displacement from land, culture, and resources through the Indian Act, and the intergenerational trauma rooted in the ongoing process of colonization.”<sup>21</sup>

The phenomenon of homelessness is often directly related to Indigenous people. This statement must be addressed on two levels. First, the word homeless has become inseparable from a “toxic narrative” that blames and demonizes people who are unhoused.<sup>22</sup> Consequently, the term “houseless” or “unhoused” will be used for the remainder of this publication, to challenge the narrative and provide them with their right to respect and dignity. Second, the automatic association to Indigenous people with houselessness is a misconception. Most Indigenous people in urban areas in Canada are not unhoused and the majority of unhoused people are not Indigenous. This misconception is due to an over-mediatization and over-representation of Indigenous houselessness. Although they are over-represented, Indigenous people make up only about 10% of the houseless population of Montreal.<sup>23</sup>

This precision is relevant to design, especially in public spaces, because unhoused are in constant interaction and relation with these spaces. It additionally serves to question the biases towards contemporary Indigenous people, and towards unhoused people, in turn in stopping the cycle of perpetuating negative and false narratives, along with non-inclusive designs. The indigenous committee of this research has expressed unanimously the value of inclusivity. We are all brothers and sisters and we all deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. The ability to afford a roof over one’s head is not a defining factor of individual value.

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21 GVCEH. Spotlight Saturday: Indigenous Homelessness in Canada. (n.d) GVCEH. <https://victoriahomelessness.ca/spotlight-saturday-indigenous-homelessness-in-canada/#:~:text=Causes,the%20ongoing%20process%20of%20colonization>.

22 Slayton, N. *Time to Retire the Word ‘Homeless’ and Opt for ‘Houseless’ or ‘Unhoused’ Instead?* (2021) Architectural Digest. <https://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/homeless-unhoused>

23 Abboud, E. Homeless Indigenous people in Montreal lack ‘sense of belonging,’ study finds. CBC news. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/study-tackles-indigenous-homelessness-in-montreal-1.4539808#:~:text=The%20study%20found%20that%20while,the%20population%20of%20Montreal’s%20homeless>.

### 1.3 Colonialism and resilience

The place that is known contemporarily as Canada was built on land that was stolen from groups of people that are still present today. It developed through a series of broken treaties and actions that brought upon Indigenous Peoples a situation in which most of its members are now in a need of healing and reparations without which a fully thriving future is challenged. The following stories illustrate the main events and actions that contributed to the current situation of Canada and its Peoples.

#### The taking of Land

There was over 15,000 years of Indigenous presence before the arrival of Jacques-Cartier and Samuel de Champlain, in 1534.<sup>24</sup> In fact, Indigenous People have been present since time immemorial. Of the first European colonials were the French, and they settled in the eastern part of Canada that is now known as the Province of Québec. They were eventually encountered with British settlers who took over the territory in 1763, and developed into the West. Throughout the years, the British colony took more and more land, leaving the Indigenous populations with practically nothing.<sup>25</sup>

Figures 3 and 4 feature the recognized Indigenous lands before and after colonization. Figure 3 illustrates present-day reserves, land claim settlement lands and Indian Lands recognized by the government. This map was created by the authors of “Supporting resurgent Indigenous-led governance: A nascent mechanism for just and effective conservation”.<sup>26</sup> The information was taken from the “Aboriginal Lands of Canada Legislative Boundaries” dataset.<sup>27</sup>

Figure 4 is a map of the territory distribution between Indigenous Peoples before colonization, from the website native-land.ca and illustrated by the authors of the mentioned article. They add that this map does not represent official legal boundaries, but is there to give a general idea of them.<sup>28</sup> It is clear today that the impact of colonization had a country-wide impact on all Indigenous Peoples and that the land was disproportionately taken by the settlers.

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24 Tremblay, R. La présence autochtone à Montréal. Ville de Montréal. (2016) <https://ville.montreal.qc.ca/memoiresdesmontrealais/la-presence-autochtone-montreal>

25 Préfontaine, E. The Settlement of Canada: an overview. Musée McCord. (2021). [http://collections.musee-mccord.qc.ca/scripts/explore.php?Lang=1&elementid=15\\_\\_true&tableid=11&table-name=theme&contentlong](http://collections.musee-mccord.qc.ca/scripts/explore.php?Lang=1&elementid=15__true&tableid=11&table-name=theme&contentlong) Consulted in 06.2021

26 Artelle, K.A. et al. Supporting resurgent Indigenous-led governance: A nascent mechanism for just and effective conservation, (2019). Biological Conservation, Volume 240, 2019, 108284, ISSN 0006-3207, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2019.108284>.

27 Government of Canada, Aboriginal Lands of Canada Legislative Boundaries. (n.d) Government of Canada. <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/522b07b9-78e2-4819-b736-ad9208eb1067>

28 Artelle K.A. et al. (2019)



Fig.3 State-Recognized Indigenous lands in Canada.  
K.A.Artelle et al. 2019

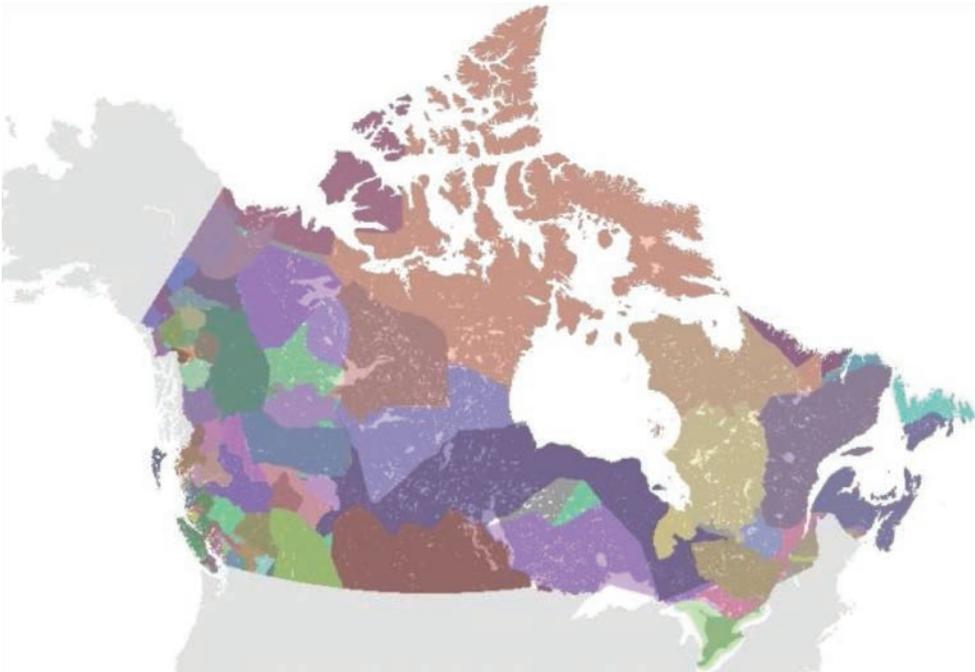


Fig.4 Indigenous Territories as described at Native-Land.ca  
K.A.Artelle et al. 2019

## Reserves and the residential school system

The efforts of colonization did not stop with the taking of land. It was furthered by a series of erasure tactics that aimed to ensure dominance and control over the Indigenous Peoples.

From the 1830s to 1996 over 100 Residential boarding schools were put in place in efforts to assimilate the Indigenous People of Canada. Set-up by the Federal Government and operated by the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches, they forcibly took the indigenous children from their homes and families, forbidding them to acknowledge or practice their Indigenous cultures, in the attempt to turn them into Euro-Canadian citizens. Over 150,000 children went, and only half returned home. The rest passed away at the schools or disappeared.<sup>29</sup> These children were also used against their knowledge as guinea pigs for malnutrition experimentation.<sup>30</sup> Abuse of all forms were extremely common and widespread. There are survivors still today that share their testimonies of their experiences.<sup>31</sup>

In 1876 The Indian Act was established by Canada's first prime minister John A. MacDonald: "The great aim of our legislation has been to do away with the tribal system and assimilate the Indian people in all respects with the other inhabitants of the Dominion as speedily as they are fit to change." – John A Macdonald 1887.<sup>32</sup> This implemented the residential school system more deeply and aggressively for the following 200 years.<sup>33</sup>

The impacts of the residential school system was not only a cultural but a literal genocide. The survivors who are still alive today live with the on-going impacts of the abuse, as well as the generations that followed them.

In an environmental point of view, having these schools along with the system of reserves, where the inhabitants were not allowed to leave the boundaries set in place by the government, kept them in a controlled, isolated environment. This isolation from non-indigenous people and from the lands outside of the reserves comes to a logical conclusion that the landscape was transformed in a way that did not take into consideration Indigenous needs or values. It can be said furthermore that these systems were proof that Indigenous needs did not matter and that their presence was to be completely erased.

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29 Hanson, E. The Residential School System [https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/the\\_residential\\_school\\_system/](https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/the_residential_school_system/) (2009) Consulted in 06.2021

30 MacDonald, Noni E. Stanwick, R. Lynk, A. Canada's shameful history of nutrition research on residential school children: The need for strong medical ethics in Aboriginal health research. US National Library of Medicine National Institutes of Health. (2014)

31 Hanson, E. The Residential School System. University of British-Columbia. (2009) [https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/the\\_residential\\_school\\_system/](https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/the_residential_school_system/) Consulted in 01.2022

32 UBC. The Indian Act. First Nations and Indigenous Studies, University of British-Columbia. (2009) [https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/the\\_indian\\_act/](https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/the_indian_act/) Consulted in 01.2022

33 Hickey, M. Conference. Design through an indigenous Lens: Decolonizing our Approach to Architecture. (2021) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMCaArTrP0o&t=2157s> Consulted in 01.2022

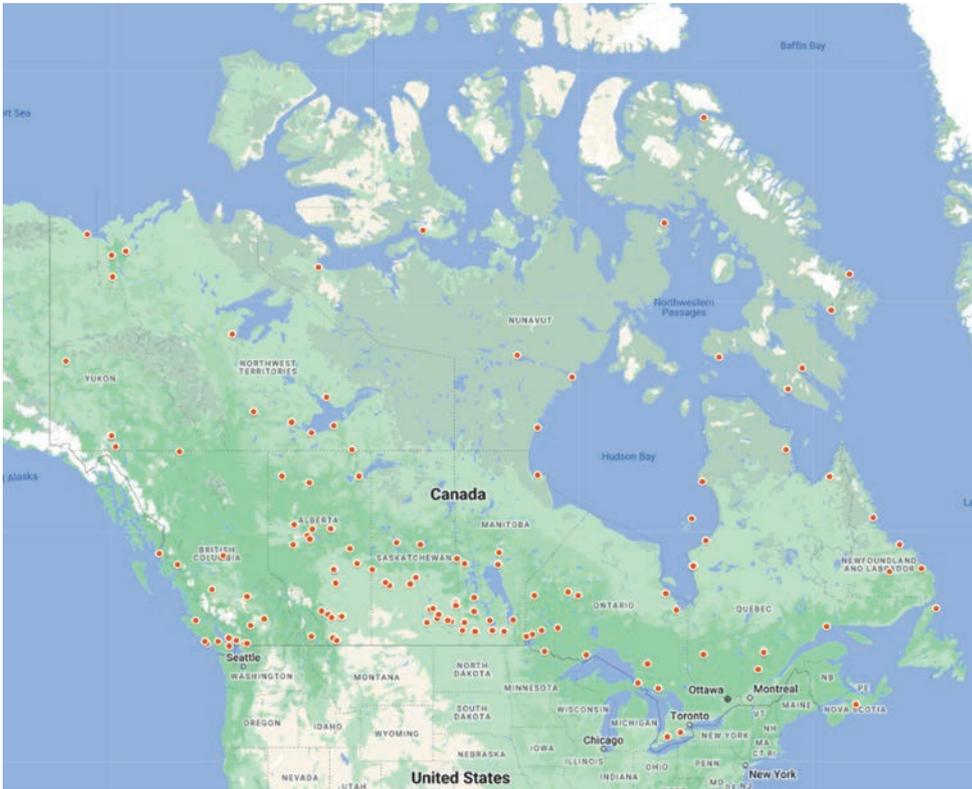


Fig.5 Residential schools of Canada. Screenshot. NCTR 2022



Fig.6 St-Anne's Residential School, Fort Albany Ontario. Mohawk Nation News (n.d)

### The shift

For many years, the indigenous people of Canada were considered as less than citizens. As part of the efforts of erasure, genocide, and assimilation, one needed to renounce their 'Indian' status in order to be allowed to vote or to attend post-secondary education. This also meant that, without status, they could not return to their hometowns, known legally as reserves, or have contact with their loved ones, so, many resisted because to them their identity was more important than anything. It was their connection to the land and to their heritage.

In 1961 The right to vote and to be educated without renouncing status was implemented throughout the country, and just six years later, the first registered Indigenous architect of Canada emerged: Douglas Cardinal. He remains a model for Indigenous architects and designers.<sup>34</sup> Consequently, there has only been a beginning of Indigenous representation in environmental design since 1967, after most of the transformation of the landscape and the development of cities. This speaks to how the structures that are present in today's landscape are almost completely imported and do not reflect indigenous values and therefore needs.

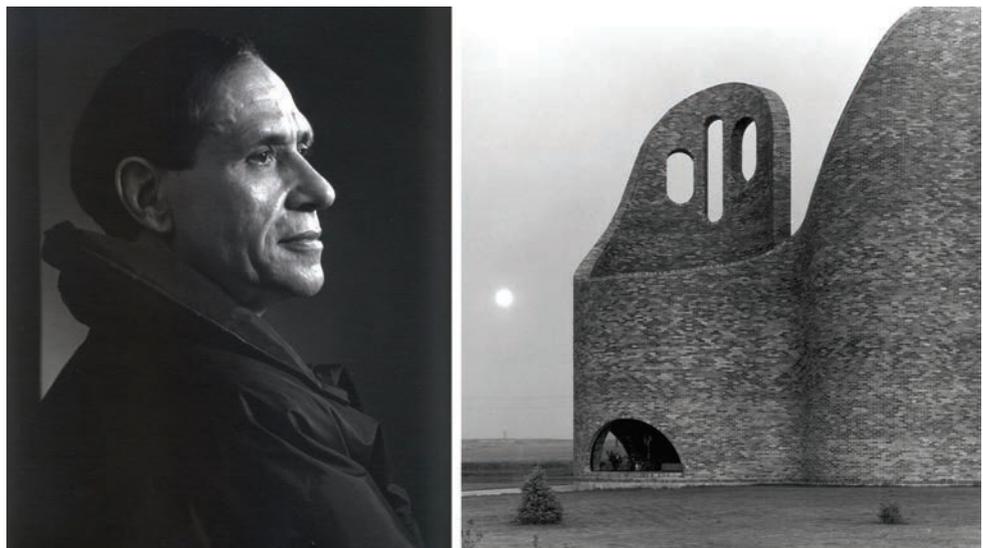


Fig.7 Douglas Cardinal  
and St Mary's Parish  
Y.Karsh (1968)

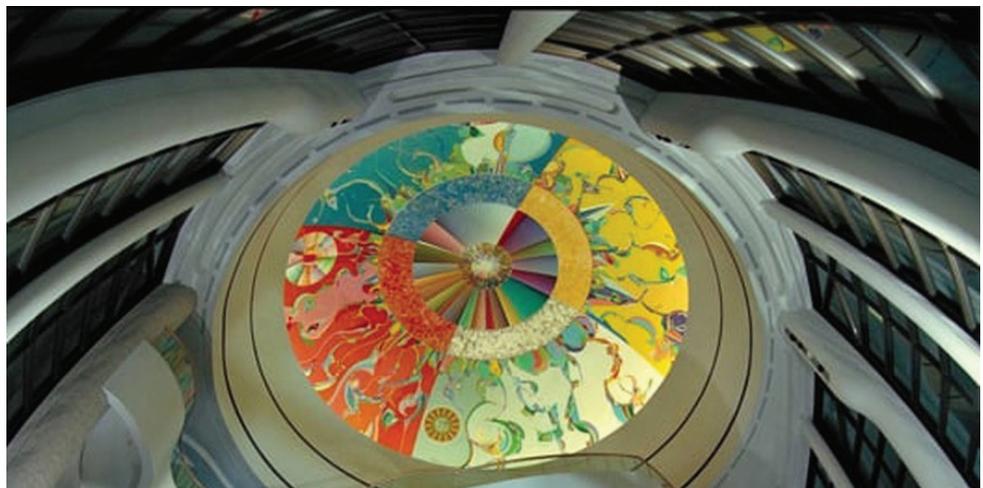


Fig.8 Museum of History  
DJ Cardinal Architects  
(n.d)

<sup>34</sup> Hickey, M. Conference. Design through an indigenous Lens: Decolonizing our Approach to Architecture. (2021) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMCaArTrP0o&t=2157s> Consulted in 01.2022

In 2007, the United Nations released the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, known as UNDRIP. “It establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the Indigenous Peoples of the world and it elaborates on existing human rights standards and fundamental freedoms as they apply to the specific situation of indigenous peoples.”<sup>35</sup> A total of four countries initially disagreed with the declaration: Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the USA, all former colonies. They have recently changed their votes in support of it.<sup>36</sup>

The following articles stand out as they refer directly to preservation of culture as well as a government’s responsibility towards reparations from past colonial actions:

#### Article 11

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to practise and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artefacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature.

2. States shall provide redress through effective mechanisms, which may include restitution, developed in conjunction with Indigenous peoples, with respect to their cultural, intellectual, religious and spiritual property taken without their free, prior and informed consent or in violation of their laws, traditions and customs.

#### Article 15

2. States shall take effective measures, in consultation and cooperation with the Indigenous peoples concerned, to combat prejudice and eliminate discrimination and to promote tolerance, understanding and good relations among Indigenous peoples and all other segments of society.

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<sup>35</sup> United Nations United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples.html> (2007)

<sup>36</sup> United Nations United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007)

### Present-day colonization

In 2019, Canada broke its agreement to respect sacred indigenous lands and developed a pipeline project that passes directly through Wet'suwet'en territory, without their consent. Peaceful protests by the stewards were met with violence from the RCMP (federal police force). A year later, the pipeline leaked and caused major contamination to the land and water that this Indigenous nation lives on and drinks from.<sup>37</sup> This has brought a new series of issues, especially concerning access to clean water. This just one of the most recent examples where the government breaks a treaty and causes massive consequences to the landscape and its people. This is a situation that is factual and of present-day relevance. It also demonstrates how Indigenous People are the protectors and knowledge holders of the landscape, along with their relevance in conversations about its transformation.

One final example that links the past to the present, ignorance with continued oppression and the importance of listening to the other side of the story, is the uncovering of hidden mass graves of residential school children. In the summer of 2021, a hidden burial ground of 215 Indigenous children aged between 3 and 16 was found on the land of a former residential school in Kamloops, British-Columbia. Thousands are now being uncovered across the country and the number was passed 10,000 as of march 2022. There are still around 128 school grounds out of 139 to investigate. A genuine acknowledgement and apology is yet awaited from Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the Pope.<sup>38</sup> As the Pope went on an apology tour in July 2022, he ended the tour with a statement recognizing that the residential schools did indeed commit literal genocide.<sup>39</sup>

There is a saying from Greek poet Dinos Christianopoulos: 'they tried to bury us, but they did not know we are seeds.'<sup>40</sup> We are now at a point in time where active efforts of assimilation and oppression are lowered but still somewhat present, due to the lack of knowledge, services, and support throughout the country. The support efforts are however rising, along with the number of indigenous citizens, especially in urban areas, despite cities not being tailored to their lifestyles and more often being extremely overwhelming and isolating.

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37 Follet Hosgood, A. RCMP, Pipeline Firm Spill Fuel on Wet'suwet'en Territory. (2020) <https://the-tyee.ca/News/2020/06/04/Pipeline-Spill-Wetsuweten-Territory/> Consulted in 01.2022

38 On Canada Project. Settlers Take Action. On Canada Project. (2021) <https://oncanadaproject.ca/settlerstakeaction> Consulted in 01.2022

39 Ka'nhehs:io Deer, Pope says genocide took place at Canada's residential schools. (2022) CBC news. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/pope-francis-residential-schools-genocide-1.6537203>

40 Meagan, H. "They Tried to Bury Us; They Did Not Know We Were Seeds" Wordpress. (2015) <https://meagangunn.wordpress.com/2015/01/20/they-tried-to-bury-us-they-did-not-know-we-were-seeds/>



Fig.9 Coastal Gaslink Pipeline going through Wet'suwet'en Territory. CBC. (n.d)



Fig.10 Indigenous children, nuns, and priests at the Kamloops Indian Residential School in 1937. NCTR (left)

Fig.11 A shrine for children at Kamloops Indian Residential School, where tribal members found 215 bodies in 2021. Cole Burston/AFP via Getty Images

“To recognize the history of the First Nations. To recognize the residential schools, the reserves. The abductions of the 1960s. To recognize the treatment that has been done to the Mohawks during the Oka Crisis. I’m not telling you that you have to feel bad, but it’s good to recognize these things exist and that they have an influence on how the First Nations see themselves and how they relate to one another. This is how we move forward.”

- Wapikoni Mobile

## 1.4 The Indigenous Nations of Quebec

The many Indigenous nations of Canada are known under three main groups being the First Nations, Inuits and Métis. The area now known as the province of Quebec is home to over 40 Indigenous communities from 10 First Nations and the Inuit, which are their own distinct Indigenous group.<sup>41</sup> Each nation has their own language, with dialects and variations depending on the community.

Beginning in the North are the Inuit. “An Inuit person is known as an Inuk. The Inuit homeland is known as Inuit Nunangat, which refers to the land, water and ice contained in the Arctic region.” “The Inuit homeland is known as Inuit Nunangat, which refers to the land, water and ice contained in the Arctic region. They are known for their distinct artistry and craftsmanship, the practice of throat singing and their sports featured in the Arctic Winter Games.<sup>42</sup>

The Nehiyawwak also known as Cree are “ the most populous and widely distributed Indigenous peoples in Canada.” Present across the country from East to West, the groups in Quebec are known as James Bay/Eastern Cree (Eeyouch). “Well-known for their beadwork, Cree (individuals create still today) beautiful and functional clothing, bags and furniture.”<sup>43</sup> In the south-western part of the province are the Algonquin communities. “Algonquin should not be confused with Algonquian, or Algonkian, which is used to describe a much larger linguistic and cultural group, which includes the Anishinaabeg, as well as the Innu and Cree.” “Algonquin artists are known for their beadwork and basketry arts.”<sup>44</sup> In the central-southern area are the Atikamekw Aski, meaning White Fish. “The Atikamekw identity comes from its territory: Atikamekw Nehirowisiw. Thus, certain ways of saying and naming elements are directly linked to the resources found in the territory.”<sup>45</sup> Today they still practice over 200 traditional activities all closely related to the land.<sup>46</sup>

In the North-East are the Naskapi nation. “Kawawachikamach is the Naskapi nation’s only community. It means ‘the winding river that changes into a large lake’.”<sup>47</sup> “The Naskapis rely on subsistence hunting, fishing, and trapping for a large part of their food supply, and for many raw materials. Harvesting is at the heart of Naskapi spirituality.”<sup>48</sup> South of the Naskapi Nation, and in the more Western part of Quebec are the Innu Nation, Innu meaning ‘people’.<sup>49</sup> Their culture is heavily related to subsistence and today there are many Innu artists who relate their language to their identity, in the form of writing, music and poetry. Some examples include Natasha Kanapé Fontaine and

41 AFNQL, Welcome to the AFNQL. (n.d) AFQNL. <https://apnql.com/en/>

42 Freeman, M.A.. Inuit. (2010) The Canadian Encyclopedia. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/inuit>

43 Preston, R.J. Nehiyawak (Cree). (2012). The Canadian Encyclopedia. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/cree>

44 Black, M.J. Algonquin (2007). The Canadian Encyclopedia. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/algonquin>

45 Atikamekw Sipi. Identité. Atikamekw Sipi.(2021) <https://www.atikamekwsipi.com/fr/la-nation-atikamekw/fondements/identite>

46 Indigenous Tourism Quebec. (2022). Atikamekw. Indigenous Tourism Quebec. <https://indigenoustyquebec.com/nations/atikamekw>

47 Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach. (n.d). Our community. Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach. <http://www.naskapi.ca/en/Overview-1>

48 Musée régional de la Côte-Nord. Portrait of the Naskapi Nation. (2010) Nametau Innu Memory and Knowledge of Nitassinan. <http://www.nametauinnu.ca>

49 Tanner, A. Innu (Montagnais-Naskapi). (2010) The Canadian Encyclopedia. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/innu-montagnais-naskapi>

Joséphine Bacon.<sup>50</sup> The Mi'kmaq are situated in the south-eastern limit, and are present generally in the Atlantic regions of the continent. "Mi'kmaq people have occupied their traditional territory, Mi'gma'gi, since time immemorial." "Contemporary Mi'kmaq artists like Alan Syliboy have reinterpreted Mi'kmaq artistic traditions, like rock painting and ornate quillwork clothing."

Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) are a little more West of the Mi'kmaq. Their name means "people of the beautiful river". "Well-known for their artistry — including carving, quillwork, beadwork and basket-weaving — the Wolastoqiyik have created priceless pieces that speak to their history, spirituality and culture."<sup>51</sup> The Wendat (Huron-Wendat), meaning 'island dwellers' have one community near Quebec City, called Wendake. Although this is not their traditional territory, they were offered their current residence after losing large portions of their people and land in wars in alliance with the French.<sup>52</sup> The Huron-Wendat of Wendake are known particularly for their production of snowshoes and moose hair embroidery.<sup>53</sup> The W8banaki (Abenaki), meaning "dawn-land people" or "people from the east" are situated North-East of the Wendat. "Abenaki culture is rich with oral histories, traditional teachings, art, drumming and dancing." It is also home to the well-known filmmaker Alanis Obomsawin.<sup>54</sup>

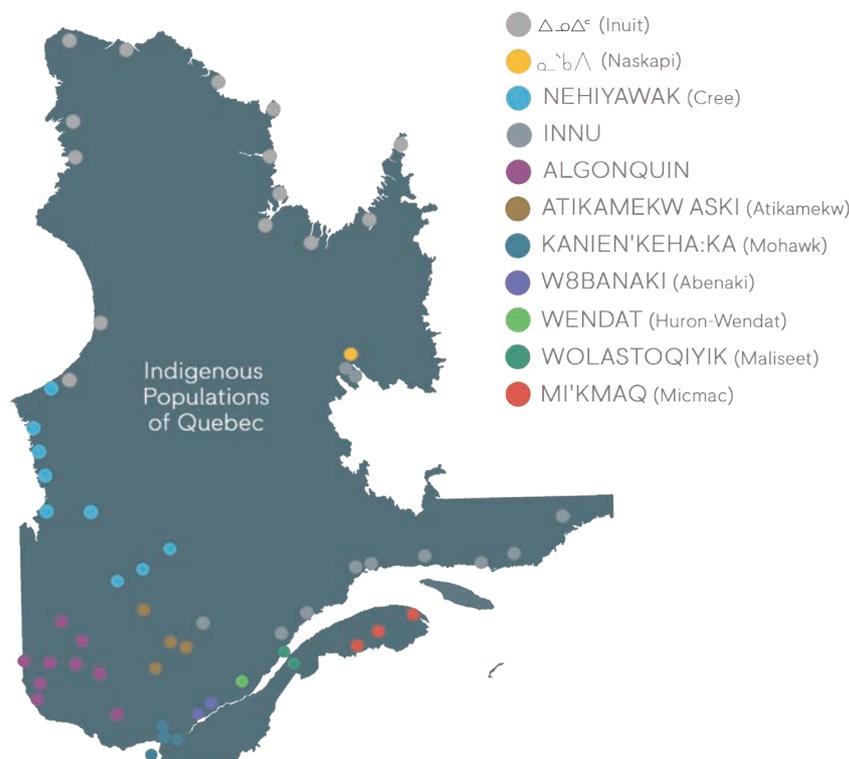


Fig.12 Indigenous populations of Quebec.

50 Picard, V. (2021, November 21). Natasha Kanapé Fontaine, artiste innue aux talents multiples. Espaces Autochtones. Radio-Canada. <https://ici.radio-canada.ca/espaces-autochtones/>

51 McFeat, T. (2006, February 7). Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet). The Canadian Encyclopedia. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/maliseet>

52 Beaulieu A. (2012, December 3). Hurons-Wendat of Wendake. The Canadian Encyclopedia. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/hurons-wendat-of-wendake>

53 Knowledge passed down by author's family

54 Snow, D. (2012, January 18, 2012). Abenaki. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/abenaki>

## 1.5 The Kanien'kehá: ka of Tiohtià:ke

Long before and up until the arrival of European settlers and colonization, Tiohtià:ke, the island known today as Montreal was taken care of by the Kanien'kehá: ka (Mohawk) who are recognized by many today as the stewards of the land. The Anishinaabe are also recognized to have historical ties to the island from ancestral occupation and stewardship of the island.<sup>55</sup> Both groups still consider this Island as part of their home and there are many members that live on it today, along with members of more than 10 Indigenous Nations, including a large community of the Inuit.

Kanien'kehá: ka (People of the Flint) are part of the Haudenosaunee (hoe-dee-no-show-nee), which is an alliance of six, originally five, nations that speak Iroquoian languages. They represent the most eastern part and are the Keepers of the Eastern Door to the Haudenosaunee territory. This alliance was made to create peace in the area. This lasted for over 200 years until the arrival of colonizers.<sup>56</sup> "Haudenosaunee people refer to themselves as Ongweh'onweh (ongk-way-HON-way), which simply means "real human being." Although many cultural similarities and family connections unite the six nations, each one is also unique and has its own distinct language."<sup>57</sup> Their alliance is illustrated by the Wampum on figure 14 called the Hiawatha Belt. It "symbolizes the unity of the original five Haudenosaunee nations, connected by the Great Law of Peace. Each white square and the tree in the centre represent one of the original five nations."<sup>58</sup>

Today the Kanien'kehá: ka communities closest to Tiohtià:ke are Kahnawake, Kanesatake, Akwesasne/St-Regis and Ganienke, the last being part of New York State. Other registered communities include Tyendinaga, Wahta/Gibson, Kanatsiohareke, and Six Nations, in Ontario and New York State.<sup>59</sup>

Figures: (Top to bottom)

13. Map of the Haudenosaunee territory circa 1730. Smithsonian. (n.d)

14. Wampum of the Haudenosaunee confederacy. The Iroquois Nation (n.d)

15. Map of the present Haudenosaunee confederacy communities. C.Sioui

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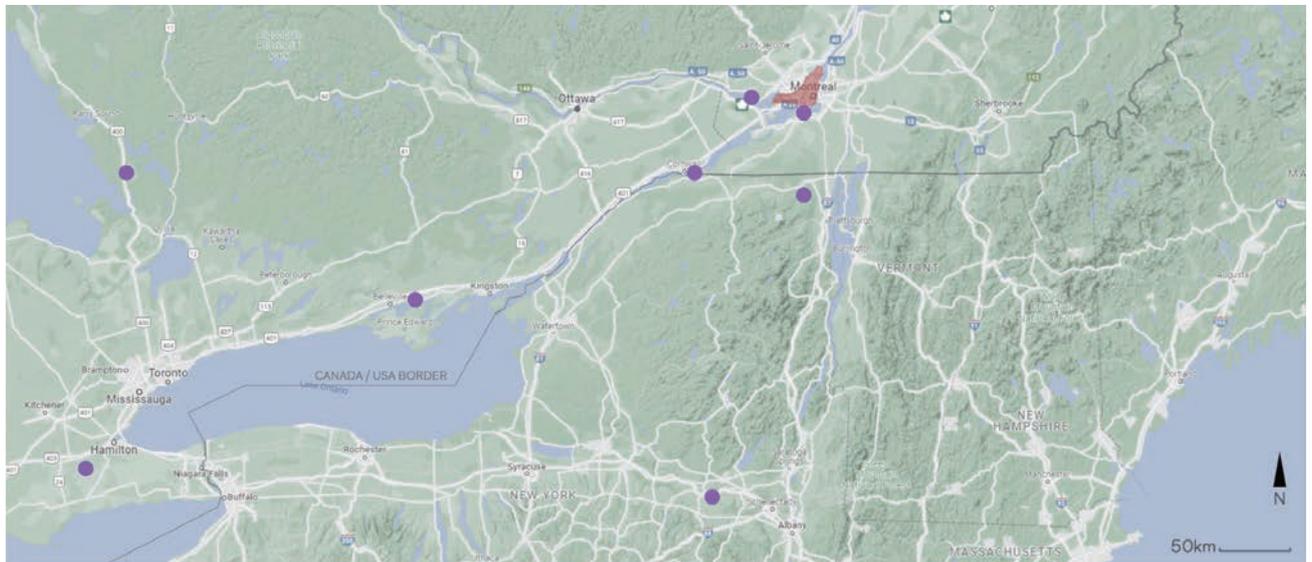
55 McGill. Learn about the Land and Peoples of Tiohtià:ke / Montreal. McGill Indigenous Initiatives. <https://www.mcgill.ca/indigenous/land-and-peoples/learn-about-land-and-peoples-tiohtiake-montreal> (2022)

56 Haudenosaunee Confederacy. (2022, July 31). The League of Nations. Haudenosaunee Confederacy. <https://www.haudenosauneeconfederacy.com/the-league-of-nations/>

57 National Museum of the American Indian. Haudenosaunee Guide for Educators. (2009) Smithsonian. <https://americanindian.si.edu/sites/1/files/pdf/education/HaudenosauneeGuide.pdf>

58 Haudenosaunee Confederacy. (2022, July 31).

59 Haudenosaunee Confederacy. (2022, July 31).



## 1.6 Unceded Territory, placekeeping and re-indigenizing cities

Montreal-Tiohtià:ke-Mooniyang is unceded territory.<sup>60</sup> This means that the original guardians of this island have not agreed to ceding ownership to the European settlers. Additionally, the ‘development’ of the island was done until this day without the consent or consultation of its recognized guardians. Nevertheless, Montreal is what it is today, and time cannot be reversed.

It is however the ethical responsibility of the municipality and the government, moving forward, to change this practice and to include the indigenous communities in all of the future developmental decisions of the land. This thesis focuses on this particular island, but there are many other places, including the capital city itself, that have endured the same fate.

It is one thing to recognize the lack of Indigenous inclusion in a city. It is another to recognize that it is a need to have representation and to change the way in which cities express their narrative through their designs, into a more Indigenous approach. Indigenous architect Wanda Dalla Costa explains the idea of placekeeping as a concept that is the “active care and maintenance of the space”. This is an approach that is inclusive to all beings and “prioritizes ecological, historical and cultural relationships in the care of ‘place’.”<sup>61</sup> elaborating on this approach, “it also means bringing the presence of Indigenous histories and futures into focus”. Another way of expressing this in the context is that of “re-indigenizing cities”, as they are built on land that is Indigenous.

Efforts of recognition and inclusion have been made throughout the country, including Toronto, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Victoria and many others.<sup>62</sup> These include the design of public spaces in collaboration with the communities, signs in the languages of the indigenous guardians of the areas, symbolism and art throughout the urban areas.

Montreal-Tiohtià:ke-Mooniyang is severely behind on this movement, although in 2020, they published a Strategy of Reconciliation for the years of 2020 to 2025, after instating a bureau of truth and reconciliation in 2018. The 7 strategies are especially relevant to the purpose of this project, as they reflect the values and actions that would indeed change the course of narrative and work towards reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous people.<sup>63</sup> Of the seven objectives are included the development of government to government relationships, improvement of the visibility of Indigenous presence, as well as improvement of the feeling of safety of Indigenous people in the city, and the protection of natural spaces through the seven-generation principle. While these objectives are in alignment with the values of placekeeping expressed by Dalla Costa, and they bring up two questions that she mentioned related to her methodologies: what makes these cities in need of Indigenous representation and how do we create these types of representation?

<sup>60</sup> McGill. Learn about the Land and Peoples of Tiohtià:ke / Montreal. McGill Indigenous Initiatives. <https://www.mcgill.ca/indigenous/land-and-peoples/learn-about-land-and-peoples-tiohtiake-montreal> (2022)

<sup>61</sup> Wanda Dalla Costa, Re-Indigenizing Cities. TD Future Cities Speaker Series. Evergreen Canada. (n.d) <https://futurecitiescanada.ca/portal/resources/td-future-cities-speaker-series-re-indigenizing-cities/>

<sup>62</sup> Multiple Sources

<sup>63</sup> Ville de Montréal. Stratégie de réconciliation 2020-2025. Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, 35 pages (2020)



Fig.16 Indigenous Elder in ceremony. City of Montreal. (n.d)



# Representation and Impact

The city of Montreal has developed in a way that excludes Indigenous people from the narrative, which in turn creates substantial challenges to well-being and relations with each other and non-Indigenous people. This chapter defines the importance of representation in the urban fabric, the problem the lack of it causes and the aim to explore how design choices have contributed to it.

## 2.1 The importance of representation

Representation matters. A recent study in the United States, by Ijoma, J.N. et al. establishes that it “matters because it can shape the reputation and self-image of women and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) within environments dominated by over-represented majorities (ORMs).”<sup>64</sup> This has a substantial effect on the narrative people have of others and of themselves. This therefore suggests that lack of representation encourages the narrative of exclusion. They explain that “From the perspective of BIPOC women trainees, the lack of BIPOC faculty who are visible minorities, particularly at the most senior level positions, often conjures questions of whether academia is a realistic career path for aspiring minority students.”<sup>65</sup> Although this example is related to career paths and academia, the underlying statement seems to be universal and applicable in cases such as environmental design, or more specifically, landscape architecture. The urban demographic is becoming increasingly diverse, so why shouldn't its fabric, its infrastructure, its shared spaces evolve with it?

Social representation in urban spaces matters because it can have a strong psychological and political impact on peoples' opinions and biases. Phil Hubbard “[developed] ideas from European social psychology, particularly that of the social representation, to explore the process by which the meaning and symbolism of these new urban landscapes is imposed by dominant interests in such a way as to make them appear legitimate.”<sup>66</sup> His main question relies on the influence of the creation of “spectacular urban landscapes” to attract investment and therefore legitimize “entrepreneurial forms of governance”. In a case study in Birmingham he interviews residents. and concludes: “such urban landscapes can potentially play a crucial role in forging a new cultural politics of place conducive to the legitimation of entrepreneurial policies.”<sup>67</sup>

In Montreal, Canada, representation of many different cultures is present throughout the city. There are even districts dedicated to specific cultures, such as Chinatown and Little Italy, which have multiple services, businesses and visual elements that represent these groups. For example, Chinatown is marked by large traditional style arches.<sup>68</sup> Little Italy has its own gate with ‘Benvenuti’ meaning ‘welcome’ in Italian.<sup>69</sup> Other groups have dedications such as the Irish monument, a carved stone in the Montreal Irish Memorial Park, that commemorates the many Irish immigrants that passed away from typhus. The stone itself was pulled out of the water by the many Irish workers in the construction of the Victoria Bridge. There have been no permanent or infrastructural dedications to Indigenous cultures in Montreal, to date.<sup>70</sup>

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64 Ijoma, J.N., Sahn, M., Mack, K.N. et al. *Visions by WIMIN: BIPOC Representation Matters*. Mol Imaging Biol (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11307-021-01663-4> Consulted in 01.2022

65 Ijoma, J.N. (2021)

66 Hubbard P. *Urban Design and City Regeneration: Social Representations of Entrepreneurial Landscapes*. Urban Studies. 1996;33(8):1441-1461.

67 Hubbard P. (1996)

68 Lee, J. *Discover a Neighbourhood: Montréal's Chinatown*. (2022). Montréal. <https://www.mtl.org/en/experience/discover-neighbourhood-montreal-chinatown>

69 Cult MTL, *Best of MTL 2020: People and Places in Montreal*. Cult Mtl. <https://cultmtl.com/2020/06/best-of-mtl-2020-people-and-places-in-montreal/>

70 Montgomery, M. *Canada History; Dec. 1, 1859: Memorial to thousands of Irish dead*. (2020)



Fig.18 Chinatown Gate  
C.Dlugosz. 2011



Fig.19 Little Italy  
Cindy Lopez (n.d)



Fig.20 Black Rock Monument  
D.Nieuwendyk. (n.d)

Radio-Canada International. <https://www.rcinet.ca/en/2020/12/01/canada-history-dec-1-1859-memorial-to-thousands-of-irish-dead/>

## 2.2 Problem and aim

The history of and on-going colonization of the land known today as Canada has not only had an impact on the Indigenous Peoples, but even on the overall landscape of the continent. After thousands of years of creation and development of cultural landscapes, they were erased and given imported faces, while the people living in these places were displaced, often without consent. Montreal is one example of an unceded territory, turned into a largely constructed metropolitan city that perpetuates narratives that do not align with Indigenous truths, values and representation. This in turn, combined with the fact that about half the Indigenous population of Quebec now lives in Montreal, has led to a series of contemporary issues with regards to these narratives and the impact on the experiences of this community.

### Problem

The initial problem that arises is that Indigenous knowledge and values are unknown, and it becomes difficult to recognize the ways and levels at which the cityscape perpetuates hurtful narratives and therefore the lives of those who receive this pain.

### Hypothesis

It is by studying the landscape in an Indigenous lens that one will understand the impact of the design choices on the narrative and therefore the people it affects.

### Aims

1. Establish an understanding of the current point of view of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people of Montreal
2. Create a scale of measurement of compatibility with the values of the Indigenous committee
3. Demonstrate the lack of representation and high colonial narrative on the landscape of Montreal





# Decolonization and Participation

Fig.21 Justice for Joyce March. C. Sioui. 2021

Since colonialism is at the heart of the issue, decolonizing research is part of the solution. This chapter goes into the importance of decolonial methods, and how to incorporate non-Indigenous strategies into them. The participatory process is a compatible example of combining Indigenous ways with non-Indigenous research methods. It is simply a question of being open and adapting to the participants.

### 3.1 Decolonizing research through storytelling and the legitimization of 'spoken/oral data'

When determining the methodology for this research project, it should be noted that it is a decolonial publication. The infrastructure of the western institution of academia is a system that is not fully compatible with Indigenous ways of passing down knowledge, and that has in turn contributed to delegitimizing indigenous knowledge, therefore furthering the narrative of Indigenous people as unknowledgeable and irrelevant, amongst other stereotypes. Indigenous researcher Lester-Irabinna Rigney reflects upon this in their Guide to Indigenist Research Methodology, and demonstrates the need for a certain level of decolonization of the academic structure by looking with a critical eye, determining what is compatible within the system and adapting it to indigenous values and practices, to then create an indigenist methodology that works with the system in place.<sup>71</sup> This is the approach that was taken in this research.

The institution of research and academia is a structure that dictates what methods and practices can be deemed 'acceptable' or 'legitimate'. The structure that relies mostly on written publication as the most legitimate source of transmission of information has historically been incompatible with the oral traditions of other cultures, namely Indigenous ones of North America. In fact, it was used as a colonial tool to delegitimize the cultures and knowledge of the Indigenous nations, therefore delegitimizing their people. Although written data is to be recognized as the format that is used predominantly, this does not negate the necessity of posing a reflective eye and adapting the methodologies by using them as tools to record the voices of the unheard and thus empower them within the dominant system. Rigney poses this reflection, suggesting that indigenist methodologies take academic tools, determine what is appropriate and adapt them to indigenous values and practices, making them Indigenous centered.<sup>72</sup>

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71 Rigney, L-I. Internationalization of an Indigenous Anticolonial Cultural Critique of Research Methodologies, A Guide to Indigenist Research Methodology and its Principles. (1999) *Wicazo Sa Review*, Vol. 14, No 2, Emergent Ideas In Native American Studies (Autumn 1999). University of Minnesota Press. pp. 109-121

72 Rigney, L-I (1999)

Participation is an essential key to reconciliation. In other words, as said by the City of Montreal, it encourages a government-to-government relationship.<sup>73</sup> Often times we speak about the concept of Land Back. What this means is not necessarily to literally give the land back, or to expel those that are already established there. It does not mean to erase what has been done, but instead to include indigenous voices in the decisions of what will be done in the future with the land. It in turn means, in this context, to add indigenous experts and representatives to the table when it comes to decisions about the landscape and the urban fabric. It is to give their voices as much importance as the ones of the government representatives, and other decision makers.<sup>74</sup> This is a way to decolonize research and governments.

Evidently, the concept of 'land back' can take on many forms. This thesis focuses on the aspect of government and empowerment in decision making. Indigenous peoples have a close relationship that has existed for thousands of years with the land. It is therefore logical to recognize their right to have a say in what gets done when it comes to decisions about the landscape, including the urban one. Giving the land back in this case is giving a voice to the recognized guardians of the land and empowering them through collaborations such as the design of Montreal's landscape.

Giving the land back can also be seen as creating a form of visibility of these stewards. Members of the committee have expressed a request for more representation in the space. This therefore causes the reflection as to how and where to create said representation. If we belong everywhere, then there should be inclusion, and representation everywhere. For this reason, this thesis speaks of the island as a whole, and the need for the municipality as a whole to make small and large changes in their way of thinking and proceeding in projects of urban design, architecture and landscape architecture.

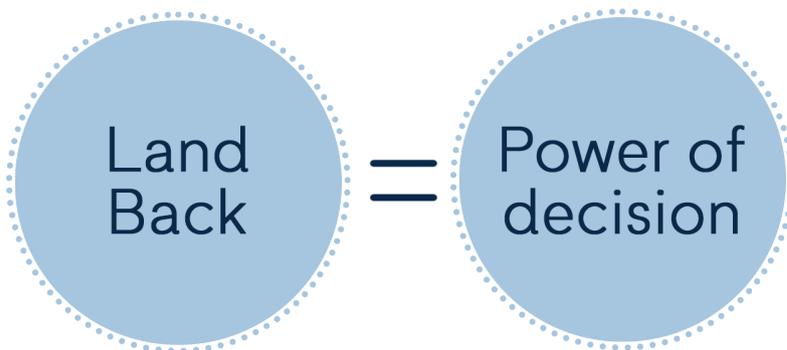


Fig.22 Land Back = Power of Decision. C.Sioui 2022

<sup>73</sup> Ville de Montréal. Stratégie de réconciliation 2020-2025. Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, 35 pages (2020)

<sup>74</sup> David Suzuki Foundation. (n.d). What Is Land Back? David Suzuki Foundation. <https://david-suzuki.org/what-you-can-do/what-is-land-back/#:-:text=Land%20Back%20is%20an%20Indigenous,about%20the%20decision%2Dmaking%20power>.

### 3.2 Participation as an answer



Fig.23 Participatory Design  
C.Sioui 2022

This thesis takes participatory methodologies and adapts them to a more Indigenous friendly approach.

When designing an urban public space, the main goal is generally to serve the potential users of the space in question. Some would say that the best way to achieve success in this is to invite the actors in question into the process.<sup>75</sup> The multiple people, organisations and institutions that come into play include those designing, those building, those paying for and those using the space and affected by the space. In the case of Montreal, this refers generally to the architects, the engineers, the municipality, the construction team, the indigenous community, local organizations and the residents and commuters of the area. Because this is a project of cultural, indigenous representation and reconciliation, the main co-creators of the concept are the indigenous committee members, as it concerns them directly.

Participatory design is a design process that brings all those mentioned to develop together a common vision that is coherent to the space and that responds to the needs of the community in question. Additionally, it gives them a voice, which can lead to a more complete understanding of the reality that takes place in the local environment.<sup>76</sup> Advantages include profitable use of space, recognition, sense of belonging, pleasant relationship between the municipality and the members of society, and finally, better understanding of the reality in the space and therefore a more successful and coherent design.<sup>77</sup>

The participatory process of design is a form of research, where the knowledge is collected from the multiple stakeholders who each carry an area of expertise that is not always complete when relying solely on literature and articles. The stakeholders are the people that will be directly affected by the design intervention and in most cases are already familiar with the surrounding environment in which the intervention will take place. Each person is an expert of their own experience and having a diverse group of participants is key to finding the answers that come the closest to a successful design that works with the needs of the ones it is made for. From an indigenous point of view, this process is particularly helpful in giving a voice and hearing the narrative of this minority group that does not often get a chance to be heard. When choosing to go forth with a participatory design process, we must recognize the value of the information that is being given to us by the participants.

Before going into the methodology, it is important to note that participatory processes should be flexible and adapted to each project and working group. The following proposal is specific to this project and can serve as an example, but not an ultimate theory.

<sup>75</sup> Crewe, K. The Quality of Participatory Design: The Effects of Citizen Input on the Design of the Boston Southwest Corridor, *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 67:4, p.437-455 (2001)

<sup>76</sup> Charlier, B. Henri, F. Le design participatif pour des solutions adaptées à l'activité des communautés de pratique. Congrès international AREF 2007 Symposium « Processus de socialisation et apprentissages en ligne ». (2007)

<sup>77</sup> Multiple sources, including Spinuzzi, C. The Methodology of Participatory Design. *Technical-COMMUNICATION*, Volume 52, Number 2, 05.2005 p.163-174

### 3.3 Indigeneity and participation

What is landscape architecture, if not to provide a meaningful experience to the individuals who enter the environments we design? The participatory process should aim to bring to light the values and needs of the communities, as well as give access to power of decision. This should result in a more comprehensive and holistic view, which could bring on designs that are culturally safe for indigenous people, giving a better sense of comfort that doesn't require large efforts for that comfort to be found.

Indigenous participation and non-Indigenous participation are not necessarily as different as one might assume. Part of this research is to explore the methodologies that work and don't work with the Indigenous community of Montreal. In fact, observations were made in terms of how questions can be posed, and what forms of directing conversation could make or break the flow of the workshop. One method that is often used by organizations in Montreal is that of the sharing circle.<sup>78</sup> This is a method that is extremely open and in which the members are invited to reflect upon a single question and see where the conversation takes them. It is then by analyzing the different themes that were most often brought up that the researcher can identify what ended up being most important to the participants.<sup>79</sup>

The sharing circle method is open and invites all to take the lead one at a time, with no specific goal, which can encourage authenticity and a feeling of lightness in the conversation. Having this lightness can take away the pressures that can come with the idea of institutions and being part of what some would call a 'scientific experiment'. It was shared in many conversations between the author and Indigenous peers that they often feel a reluctance to participate in research with non-Indigenous researchers, because the ambiance that is created feels like an 'interrogation'. The types of interviews mentioned were the ones where they were sat in a room, one on one, or alone with a few researchers and were asked multiple questions in a row, watching the person take notes and not always reply. They were not comfortable in these settings. Having a sharing circle means that many members of the community are together and in conversation with each other, where they understand each other and can connect and reflect together on subjects they relate on, or even don't relate on. Overall it makes the space feel safer. Therefore, when conducting workshops in this project, it was mostly through sharing circles, with an elder present to ensure safety and be there to support anyone who needs it at the end of each session.

Although meeting in person and sitting in a circle is the preferred method, this project was done during the COVID-19 pandemic, so it was necessary to do every interaction online. These were done by zoom, in sessions ranging between 1 and 2 hours. For additional support, the platforms of Miro and Google Slides were used, as they allow for additional participation through writing and photos.

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<sup>78</sup> Observed from experience (2017-2022)

<sup>79</sup> Observed from experience (2017-2022)

### 3.4 Research and methodology in collaboration with the INRS

The Institut National de Recherche Scientifique (INRS), the Mikana organisation and the author came into collaboration in the second phase of their research, from which point the author participated in the methodology and development of the process. All research, methods and findings prior to phase 2 were developed, executed and collected solely by the INRS and Mikana.

The main goals of the project were to firstly to explore the relationships between indigenous and non-indigenous populations of Montreal as well as their relationship with the city itself.

In January 2021, the collaboration with the Institut National de Recherche Scientifique, began. This thesis is integrated in a research project exploring indigenous and non-indigenous relationships with the city, experiences of and biases towards indigenous people, and finally, how to create better relationships through encounters. The participatory design of the public space fits into this research as one proposal in terms of education, experience, relationships, and encounters with and within the city.

The research project consists of three chapters, two of which the author participated in and/or developed. The first chapter explores the non-indigenous point of view, demonstrating the biases and general opinions and ideas of non-indigenous people in Montreal towards the indigenous community. This brought results of general ignorance, misinformation, and little to no contact with indigenous people, other than the stereotypes of homelessness. It also brought the result of a desire for positive encounter and knowledge.

The second chapter consisted of four evenings of sharing circles, where indigenous participants would talk about their experience with the city, supported by visual representations, mostly through photos that helped express these experiences. From this, a series of themes came out, giving a general impression of the important aspects of urban living through the indigenous lens. The main conclusion was the lack of visibility and sense of belonging throughout the island. 'We belong everywhere' was an important point, because the island is unceded territory, which means the settlers who took over the island and developed the city did it without permission or agreement from the recognized indigenous guardians of the land. This means that the island still technically is what we would call 'unceded territory', which entails the right of the indigenous people to the whole of the territory and therefore demonstrates the 'land back' movement. Today, it is impossible to reverse what has been done.

The third chapter is all about the participatory design process with the indigenous committee which consists of some members of the second chapter, along with a few new members. This was a series of workshops to determine the values the participants held in terms of the public space and its design, the important elements to include, and discussion about three propositions for a case-study.

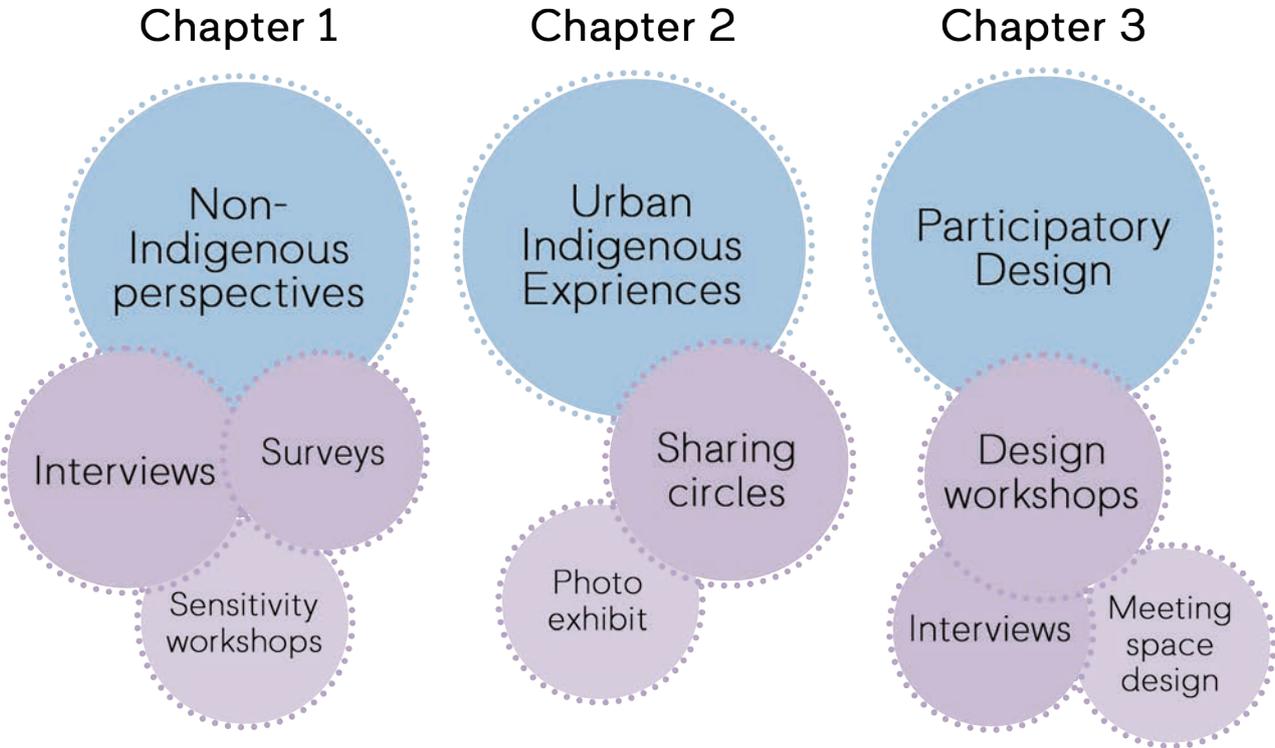
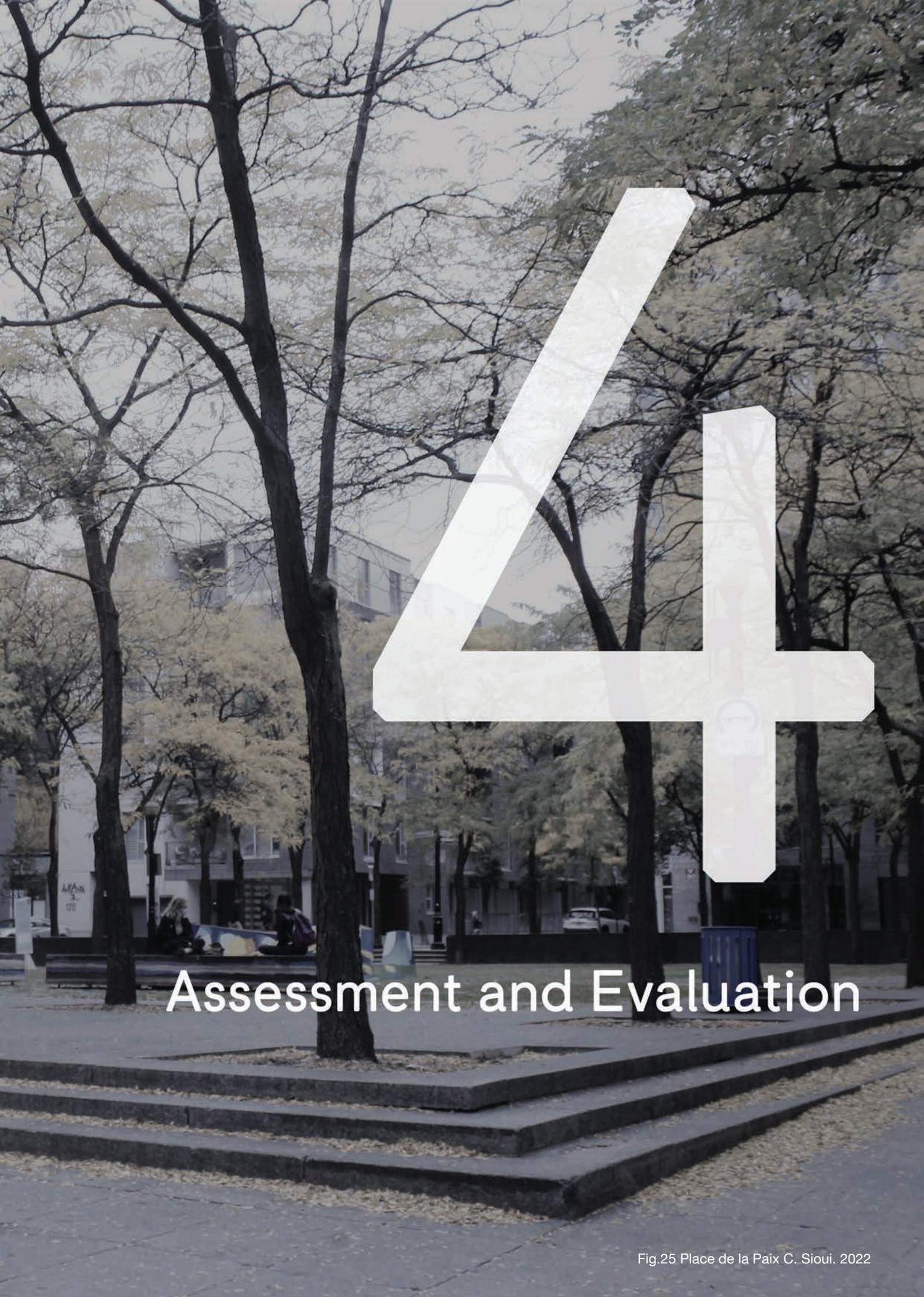


Fig.24 Research Chapters  
C.Sioui 2022



4

# Assessment and Evaluation

The Institut National de Recherche Scientifique and the author collaborated in assessing the experiences and knowledge of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous people in Montreal. Moreover, they developed and hosted participatory workshops to define a series of values and elements that are important to the Indigenous participants, as a way to evaluate the current landscape of the city and its compatibility with the Indigenous community of the island.

#### 4.1 Results from chapters 1 and 2: interviews, surveys and sharing circles

##### Chapter 1: Non-Indigenous points of view

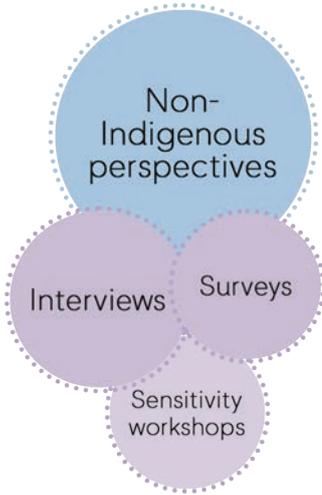


Fig.26 Participatory Design Chapter 1. C.Sioui 2022

The research project began with an assessment of the ideas and experiences that non-indigenous individuals of Montreal have towards and with indigenous people. The many conversations and surveys gave light to these main conclusions. First off, there was a general ignorance towards indigenous history. Most of the participants were not aware of the many events and actions brought by the government throughout Canada's history. Most had a historical education whose chapters on indigenous people ended at the beginning of colonization.

The second conclusion was a lack of contact with the indigenous community. The majority had had very little encounters, if not none, within the city of Montreal. They mostly observed that there was a lack of visibility, other than that of the unhoused demographic, which to them is extremely present. The last conclusion is that most participants have a wish for more indigenous visibility, knowledge and more occasions for meeting and exchange. Additionally, 94% were in agreement with the addition of the white pine on the flag of the city of Montreal, representing the indigenous community and contribution to the city.

A survey was also handed out asking about opinions on the recent addition to the flag of Montreal. Originally, the flag had the four symbols on the corners, representing the French, the English, the Scottish and the Irish, recognizing the origins of the city. In 2017, they added the white pine in the center, to represent the Indigenous People who were first excluded. The survey question asked if the participants agreed with the change. 69% agreed, while 15% were unaware, and 4% disagreed.

The final conclusions of these surveys and meetings were that the people of Montreal were ready for reconciliation, recognize their lack of knowledge and deplore not having more opportunities and places to meet.



Fig.27 Flag of Montreal.  
City of Montreal. (n.d)

Chapter 2: Indigenous points of view

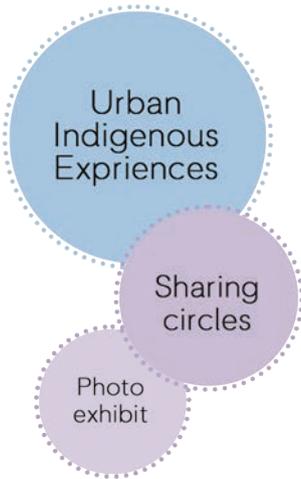


Fig.28 Participatory Design  
Chapter 2. C.Siouï 2022

The second chapter looked into the experiences and relationships of the indigenous community of Montreal, with and within the city, through the format of sharing circles where each participant was invited to tell their stories and to share photos, illustrations, poems and any other form of art to support them.

These discussions were open and free. The ambiance of a sharing circle is one where everyone gets the chance to speak at least once, and it takes on the format of a free conversation according to what each participant wanted to share. The general method is to simply let the conversations flow, which allows authenticity and for the minds of the participants to go naturally in the directions that their spirit brings them in. This also gives a feeling of safety, welcome and non-judgement, which creates closer bonds and more openness. Afterwards, the conversations that took place are transcribed and put into a program called NVivo, which identifies themes and words that come up multiple times. The 6 themes that came up in these conversations were the following:

- We Belong Everywhere
- Colonialism and resistance
- Inspiring people and community
- Diverse Identities
- Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations
- Relations to the territory and the bodies of water

These six themes were the most prominent in conversation. They sparked the most discussion and reaction. In conclusion, these seem to be the most important general themes for the Indigenous participants in relation with the City of Montreal.

In the last workshop, they were asked about what criteria they would want for a public space within the city that would tell an indigenous story and serve at a place of exchange between indigenous and non-indigenous people. They came up with the following criteria. The space would be public, accessible and central. It would be easy to see, be a space that allows gathering, and is flexible. The last criteria refers to the elements that are present in the space, how easily they can be converted and how easily the natural elements could take over afterwards, when the space is no longer used. They do not wish to remove what is already present, but to catalyse and add to it. This is part of the way of many Indigenous Peoples, finding value in what is there and enhancing it to serve all.

Public



Accessible



Convertible



Gathering



Central



Visible



Fig.29 Public space criteria for visibility. C.Sioui 2021

Chapter 3: Defining values and elements

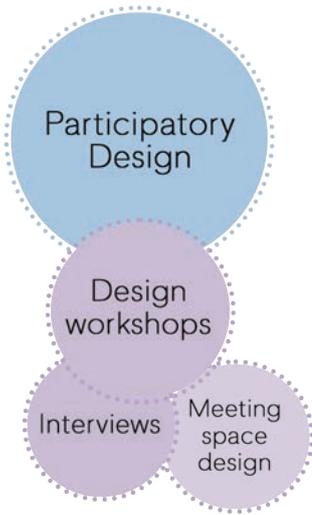


Fig.30 Participatory Design Chapter 3. C.Sioui 2022

The indigenous committee was composed of 8 members, of ages ranging between 20 and 80, coming from communities across the province of Quebec. This included two elders of the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation, the closest First Nation to the island, and recognized stewards of Tiohtià:ke. There were also members of the Anishinaabe, Innu, Nehiyew, and Wendat First Nations, as well as an Inuit member.

The first two workshops began without a space in particular. Since the space had not been chosen yet and was still in discussion with the municipality, the first two workshops took more of an abstract form. While an in-person series of sessions were preferable, they took place in an online format, due to the circumstances of the pandemic. This happened through video-call with a common page on the platform Miro, where the participants could add comments, ideas, and illustrations. This helped to make the workshops interactive and freeing for the participants, allowing them to actively participate throughout the sessions.

In the first one, the group discussed what values are important to them when they think of a public space, as well as what is missing and what makes them feel good in the space. The results were then taken and summarized into the illustration on Figure x. They included wishes such as those of places of gathering for families and ceremony. While many words came out and were discussed, there were three themes that brought them all together: stories, inclusivity and environment. Each of these themes are bound by common values such as Truth, accessibility and the seven generation principle. Other values can be viewed on figure x. These themes are surrounded by a series of values that can translate them, and finally, in the center is the omnipresent value of non-hierarchy which is a comprehension of all elements as equal members of the circle of life.

The second workshop served as a review of the results of the first workshop, looking through the summary and making adjustments. It then went more into detail about the specific elements that were most important to include in the public space. These include water, fire, ceremony, art, stone, biodiversity, play and cultural diversity.

Fig.31 Values for the public space design C.Sioui 2022 (top)

Fig.32 Elements for the public space design C.Sioui 2022 (bottom)



### 4.2 Synonymus and exclusive terms and values

Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures are not as opposing as one would think. There are terms that are exclusive to some communities, and there are others that ring true to a majority. The following terms were either found through research or discussed within the participatory workshops with the Indigenous committee. They all hold elements that connect us rather than divide. They all strive to bring everyone forward together.

#### Two-eyed seeing

The Mi'kmaw principle of Two-eyed-seeing is a guiding principle of life that recognizes that there are different ways of seeing the world, and that each have valuable strengths to bring to the world. It recognizes that it is by bringing them together that life can be improved for everyone, moving us all forward together, as explained by Mi'kmaw Elder Albert.<sup>80</sup>

His colleague Dr. Cheryl Bartlett understands Western Science and Indigenous knowledge in the following ways:

“Mainstream, Western science has the ability to look at the physical world, see patterns within it, take those patterns apart and find the mechanisms that bring them into existence. On the basis of that reconstructed understanding, (we) try to improve upon our material understanding.”<sup>81</sup>

“Indigenous people also see patterns, and instead of taking them apart to reconstruct, it's more of a working of patterns within patterns, in other words, a weaving of yourself and your understanding into the world in which you live.”<sup>82</sup>

She suggests that using comparison and contrast methods including indigenous knowledge would be helpful in having a more holistic understanding of the world and the different schools of thought that exist, bringing forward that the western way is but one way, and not the only way. In this section, the values identified with the indigenous community will be compared and contrasted with non-indigenous values, with the goal of recognizing differential points of view and finding commonalities.<sup>83</sup>

#### Inclusivity and accessibility

The terms of 'inclusivity' and 'accessibility' are shared both by Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples. When the committee spoke of these terms, they spoke of Tiohtià:ke as a meeting place in which all must find their belonging. It also means that underrepresented groups, such as the Inuit, deserve to be taken care of and seen as much as the others. They also spoke of discussion, the inclusion of Indigenous representatives in discussions that will change our landscape. What they also mean with these terms is the thought given to all

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80 Elder Albert Marshall, Two-Eyed Seeing. (2012) Cape Breton University. <http://www.integrativescience.ca/Principles/TwoEyedSeeing/>

81 Dr. Cheryl Bartlett, Two-Eyed Seeing. (2012) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_CY-iGduw-5c&ab\\_channel=CherylBartlett](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_CY-iGduw-5c&ab_channel=CherylBartlett)

82 Dr. Cheryl Bartlett (2012)

83 Idem

ages, families and elders in the design. Finally, they spoke of safety, and the importance of providing spaces in which people feel not only physically, but mentally and spiritually safe.

### Stories and history

The narratives we create in the spaces we design are extremely impactful. When the participatory committee spoke of stories and history, they spoke of restoring a balance between narratives. They expressed that there is a lack of truth in the stories that are told, and how it should be brought forth. Some of the stories that are important to them include those of resilience and those of Turtle Island.

### Environment and sustainability

Sustainability is an ancient concept that has always existed in Indigenous values and cultures. Indigenous peoples protect 80% of the important ecosystems of our planet.<sup>84</sup> They have understood for millennia that the environment is a complex system that when treated with disrespect can cause it to become complicated and imbalanced, breaking the sustainable cycles and therefore harming the continuity of life. There is a principle that many cultures, including that of the Kanien'kehá:ka and the Anishinaabe share, which is the seven-generation principle. This means that everything one does will have an impact on seven generations going forward, and that present reality is impacted by seven generations back. This applies to all aspects of life, whether it's a short personal exchange or a forest fire. If one thing rings true to most Indigenous individuals of Turtle Island (North America), it is the close conscience to and relationship with the surrounding environment. All of the answers lie within it. It is where food, shelter, medicine, and fulfilment can be found. Everything is its' own self and is in relationship with each other, and that is something to be respected and honoured.

### Non-Hierarchy

The concept of non-hierarchy is closely tied to the concepts of environment and sustainability. It is the idea that all beings are elements of a continuous series of cycles that can also be understood as the circle of life. It was explained in the participatory workshops that we all have roots to mother earth and that we all have a responsibility to take care of her and to be grateful for the home she provides us with. Everything one can possibly need to survive and thrive is in the environment around us, and our well-being is just as important as that of the trees, the animals, the water, and every other element around us, and we all need each other to thrive in order for us to thrive. Sustainability cannot exist without changing our mindsets towards a non-hierarchical one. It is a question of respect.

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<sup>84</sup> The World Bank, Indigenous Peoples. (2022). The World Bank. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/indigenouspeoples>



# Colonial Narratives in Montreal

Colonialism is a process that has been active for centuries in North America, and has been embedded into the environment that was shaped as a result. This was done through the creation of cities with narratives that cater to the story of settlers and the erasure of Indigenous presence and heritage, which in turn affects how people see themselves and others. This chapter demonstrates the narratives that are currently present on the island of Montreal, by evaluating public spaces with the help of a scale created mainly through the results of the study.

### 5.1 Urban development as a tool for colonialism

The island of Tiohtià:ke-Montreal-Mooniyang was one of the first cities founded in the colonization of Canada, following the city of Quebec. As the French settlers arrived and started trade businesses, this island, then baptized by the French as Ville-Marie quickly went from being a popular port to a metropolitan city.<sup>85</sup> It can be argued that urban development played a large role in colonialism and continues to do so today. This island is an example of how the development of the city was used as a colonialist tool to remove indigenous peoples and their cultures. What can be observed in the last five centuries of Tiohtià:ke are three large themes: dominance, displacement, and erasure.

Before the arrival of European settlers, Tiohtià:ke was known as an island of gathering between the many nations surrounding it, with a couple of villages. It was where many political negotiations were made between nations and where important ceremonies took place year-round. It was a metropolis, much like it still is today. The notion of ownership was not part of most First Nations' values, especially the Kanien'kehá: ka, recognized stewards of this island. The stewards have a duty to take care of the land. This included shaping and regulation of the ecosystems living on it. They shaped and sustained the landscape of Tiohtià:ke. Although there was no 'permanent' infrastructure, the traces of their presence lied in the catalysed ecosystems, the implementation of vegetation, the fauna demographics, and sometimes the objects created from elements of the land and left over from village movements.<sup>86</sup>

Urban development slowly broke the balance of this landscape until it was almost completely gone. By stripping the land of its elements and implementing foreign infrastructure, it not only impacted the ecosystems of the island, but it erased thousands of years of culture, hard work and history, making it unusable by the First Peoples. A strong difference between Western and Indigenous values is this view of elements of the landscape as resources to exploit versus the view of them as beings to respect and take care of. One is a hierarchal, linear system of dominance. The other is a non-hierarchal cyclical system of balance.

One clear example that englobes the themes of dominance, displacement and erasure is that of the great white pine. The St-Lawrence river used to be lined with thousands of ancestral white pines. The settlers saw them as wood for boats. The Kanien'kehá:ka see them as sacred trees of life, connecting the people of earth to the ancestors in the sky. It wasn't long before the shores were stripped of all their white pine.<sup>87</sup>

The colonial development of the city brought on displacement of indigenous villages, such as Kanehsatake, which was displaced multiple times.<sup>88</sup> The city rapidly grew and took over the lands they once occupied and stripped the forest and fields to replace them with agriculture and eventually urban infrastructure.

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<sup>85</sup> Gourd, Benoît-Beaudry, Ville-Marie (Qué). (2015) The Canadian Encyclopedia. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/ville-marie-que>

<sup>86</sup> Participatory workshops, INRS (2021)

<sup>87</sup> Participatory Workshops, INRS (2021)

<sup>88</sup> Obomsawin, Alanis. Kanehsatake: 270 years of Resistance. (1993) NFB. 119min. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7yP3srFvhKs&ab\\_channel=NFB](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7yP3srFvhKs&ab_channel=NFB)

The urban development of Montreal can be seen as an act of domination over people and over nature. It erased the landscape, the culture, and therefore the people, with no regard for their values, history or way of life. The history of Tiohtià:ke did not begin with colonization, but colonization erased most traces of the history that came before it. Today there are archeological findings of the presence of people before colonization, along with some of the belongings that did not deteriorate, but the cultural landscape is gone. It however is not often even thought of when non-indigenous designers study the history of the spaces they want to design within the city.

The reflection that arises from these stories is that decolonizing the urban space is valuing indigenous history, by valuing the cultural landscape that was erased, and aiming to reintegrate it into the current cityscape that stands upon its surface.

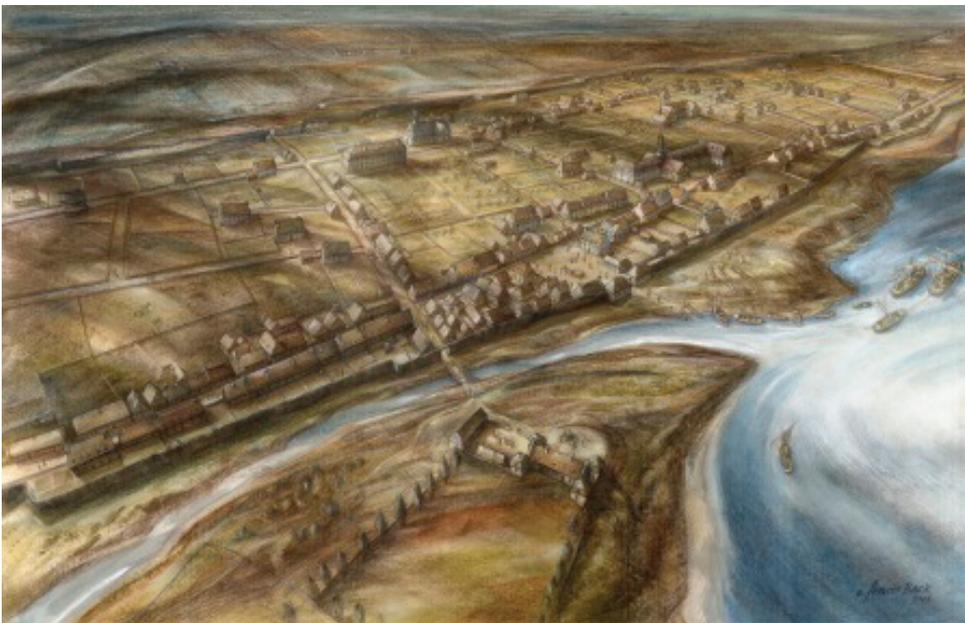


Fig.34 Montreal in 1700. F.Back. (n.d)

### 5.2 Colonial narratives and urban development

As the city developed, so did urban planning, architecture and artistic dedications to the colonial history, which perpetuate a historical narrative of dominance of two cultures, the French and the English, surrounded by a contemporary dominance of the modern imported movements of city planning and landscape architecture.<sup>89</sup> Tiohtià:ke is an island that was designed by non-indigenous people. This truth can be explained by the following logic: in order to design the city, one must participate in a system that requires training, funds, and power of decision. Indigenous people did not have access to training until 1960 and they still do not have power of decision, especially in urban municipalities that are dominated by non-indigenous people. What will be demonstrated is that this exclusion of Indigenous Peoples in the transformation of the landscape of the island is what brought a series of design decisions that do not concur with Indigenous needs and values.

The English and french histories are present in the general architecture of the city, with quarters such as Vieux-Montréal and Plateau Mont-Royal which have French heritage, along with many English style buildings such as the Fine arts Museum, Bonaventure markets and so on, not to mention the 650 Christian churches. The more contemporary cityscape is seen in areas such as the business district, and griffintown, hosted by large towers, and the industrial areas around the Lachine canal. The whole of the island is connected by car dominated infrastructure and only about 10% of the surface is green surface, as seen on the 2022 map, generally in the form of parks and plazas in either French, English or generally Western styles. This description is inherently not indigenous nor compatible with indigenous values and ways of life. Practically 100% of Montreal is not representative of Indigenous People.

The idea of stripping a space of it's current value, and building permanent infrastructure with highly transformed and imported materials, is a concept that is not Indigenous.<sup>90</sup> It perpetuates a narrative of disrespect and superiority over others. This chapter aims to bring consciousness to the social and environmental impacts of these types of ideals in design.



Fig.35 Griffintown, Montreal  
City of Montreal. (n.d)

<sup>89</sup> Morisset, L.K. et al. Architectural History: the French Colonial Regime. (2015). The Canadian Encyclopedia. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/architectural-history-the-french-colonial-regime>

<sup>90</sup> Hickey, M. (2021). Conference. Design through an indigenous Lens: Decolonizing our Approach to Architecture. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMCaArTrP0o&t=2157s>

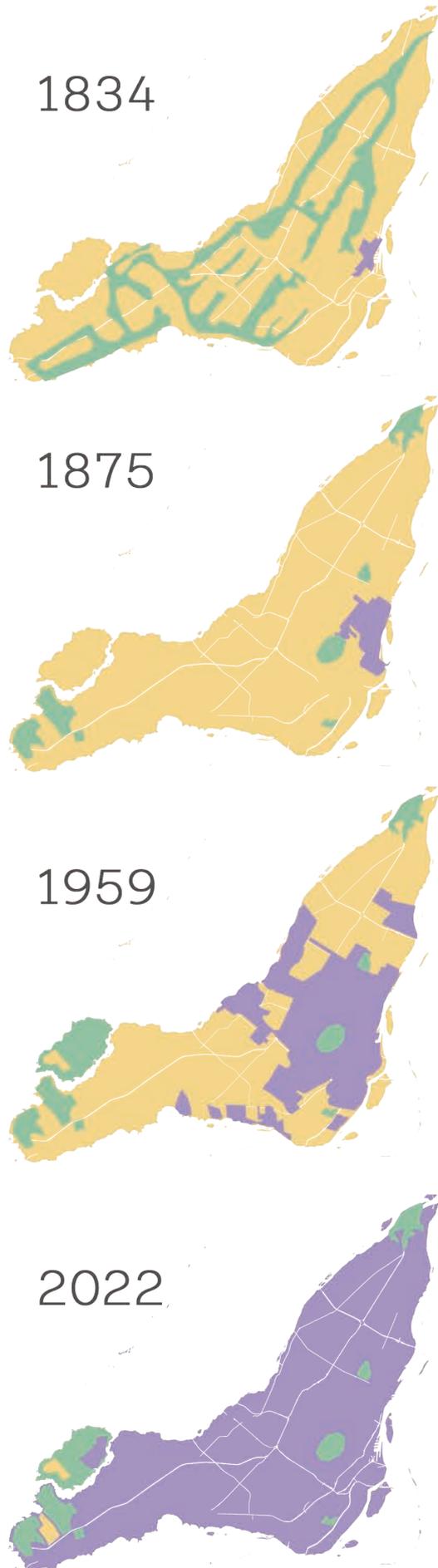


Fig.36 Urbanization of Montreal from 1834 to 2022

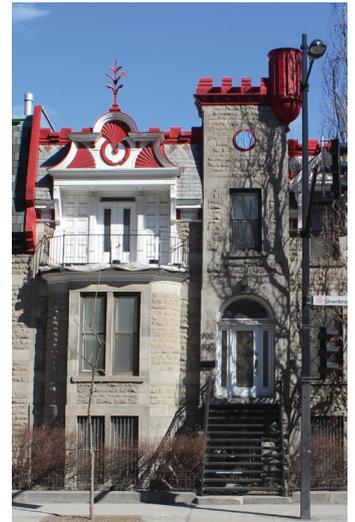


Fig.37 Plateau Mont-Royal. C.Sioui 2019

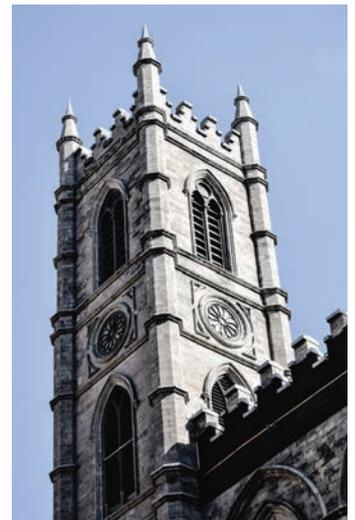


Fig.38 Notre-Dame Cathedral E.Bronzini. (n.d)



5km

-  Agriculture
-  Forest/Untouched
-  Urban Development

### 5.3 Evaluating public spaces in Montreal

Non-Indigenous designers, although having expressed a desire for Indigenous representation and culturally safe spaces, do not know where to begin. It is such a complex thing to navigate collaboration and relationships with cultural groups that are different in knowledge, needs and values, especially when one comes from a group that was and still is historically and systemically unfair to the other.

One way to start is by looking at the spaces that are already present in the surrounding environment and recognizing where they situate in compatibility with the values and ways of life of the groups in question. The following is a scale that is inspired by the conversations had with the Indigenous committee and the Native Montreal organization. Many have spoken of the places in which they were comfortable or uncomfortable, pointing out the aspects and elements that has a positive or negative impact on their experiences. Additional research included interviews with experts who have equally interpreted certain spaces and their impacts on narrative.

The scale is meant to be a general guide for non-Indigenous designers to navigate the inclusivity of Indigenous Peoples in the narrative and representations imbedded into design. It is not a scale that is set in stone and it may vary according to the community and members that the designer or project manager is collaborating with. Please note that all attempts to create designs and spatial interventions that include Indigenous representation and elements must be created with Indigenous members, and approved by Elders and Indigenous experts of the communities in question. The Indigenous members, experts and participants must be financially compensated in the creation of these projects. If one expects this knowledge to come freely, then one expects exploitation as an acceptable method. It is not. Please contact and collaborate with the Indigenous communities that will be represented in the space, from the beginning of the project.

The main audience is non-Indigenous, so it is adapted to their language and comprehension of the theme. For example, the scale begins on the left with Folklore and stereotypes. It is situated on the 'Traditional Indigenous' side, because Non-Indigenous people tend to interpret certain misinformations as Indigenous traditions. They are not, and they should not be considered as such. However, given the current understandings, it was appropriate to place it in that space. The following is a description of the six sections, going from traditional Indigenous ways and knowledge, to non-Indigenous ways and knowledge.

#### Folklore/Stereotype

There have been attempts to represent Indigenous Peoples in current landscapes. Many that were made without Indigenous participants have represented them in ways that are not accurate nor respectful, because they come from pre-conceived ideas nurtured by ignorant or oppressive colonial narratives. This type of representation can be avoided by collaborating with the communities one want to represent.

#### Exclusion/Oppression

This sits on the opposite side of the scale and is also to be avoided. These include spaces that go against Indigenous values, or perpetuate narratives of dominance over Indigenous People, like certain colonial artworks.

Faithful reproduction

There are contexts in which recreating a historically and culturally accurate replica of a traditional structure or object can be acceptable. These contexts are controlled, educational spaces, such as museums and educational institutions, in which respectful interpretation can be provided.

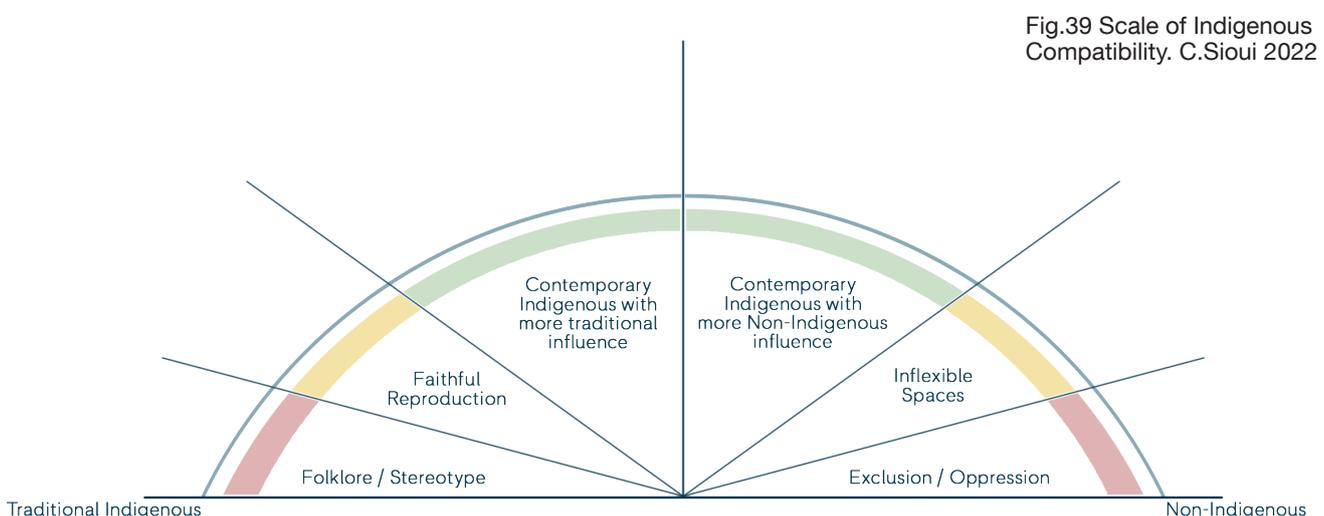
Inflexible spaces

There are times when a space has already been constructed for years and it is subject of transformation or revamping. It can also be a space that is present in an inflexible context. In this case, one works with what is possible within the provided space. This can include institutional campuses that wish to add Indigenous representation, or urban plazas surrounded by present structures with their own individual value.

Contemporary Indigenous

It is clear that practically no space is completely exempt of non-traditional knowledge and design. This is something we must all accept. Urban landscapes are what they are today and they are not going anywhere anytime soon. Indigenous People have evolved and adapted with them. This doesn't mean that their values and knowledge were respected in these developments. It is now a time where Indigenous People have created contemporary techniques that honour traditional knowledge and values, by integrating them into designs that are adapted to the present environments. They vary between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous influence depending on the spaces in question. This is where one should strive to be. Honour the people who's land you are on, by designing in alignment with their values and knowledge.

The variables that are evaluated in the scale are the following: material, biodiversity, artistic and cultural elements, function, insertion, shapes and Indigenous participation. These were chosen in response to the values and elements generated from the results of the participatory workshops. Although most of these variables speak for themselves, one precision can be given to the 'insertion' variable. This is meant to represent the level of embedment into the surrounding environment, when possible.



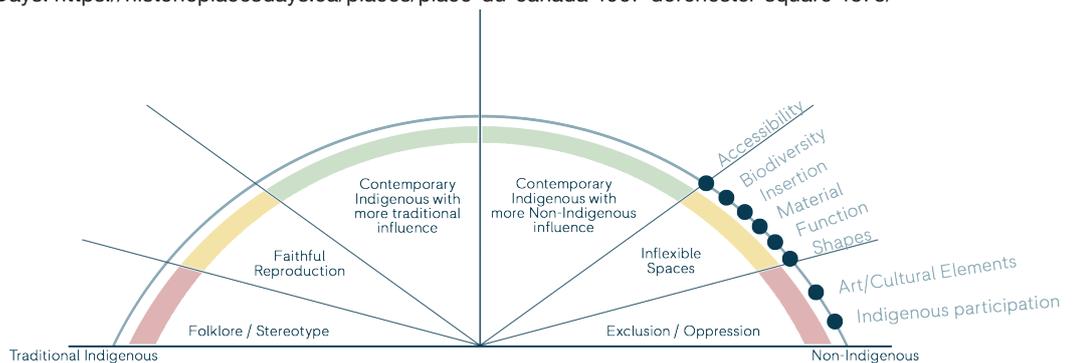
Place du Canada and Dorchester Square

These two plazas, situated in the heart of Montreal represent the reconciliation between the English and the French after almost 200 years of colonial conflict. They both host a series of dedications to people deemed historically impactful, mainly gifts from monarchs and presidents. In the center stand a duo of large monuments, one representing the first French prime minister, the other with the first English prime minister, positioned on the square of the other, facing each other from across Boulevard René-Lévesque, in a final act to symbolize peace between the two cultures.<sup>91</sup> Although the story may seem harmless, the prime minister placed on a 5m high pedestal in a nearly 15m tall monument is Sir John A. MacDonald, known for his racist actions against Indigenous people, including the Indian Act, the establishment of Reservations and the development and implementation of the residential school program with the Christian churches across the country. In fact, in 2019, this statue was pulled off the pedestal and the head of it was severed in the process. The City of Montreal is still in the process of deciding what action would be appropriate. This poses a question in the process of decolonization. How do we proceed when the people that were once respected and celebrated behold stories and values that are no longer shared by today’s society, especially in the public space?

Where this design stands on the scale of Indigenous compatibility is the complete opposing side of where one wants to be, in terms of art and cultural elements, as well as Indigenous participation, because they tell a story of colonialism and celebrate a man who drove the erasure and abuse of Indigenous Peoples, and the other cultural representations exclude their presence. Although these squares may be slightly accessible in terms of location, their dedication to the colonial narrative makes them culturally unsafe. They also serve a yellow score in function and insertion, given the urban context. The shapes within the plazas are inflexible and eurocentric on Dorchester square, following a french garden style, with straight paths pointing towards a central monument, with low trimmed grasses and statues, whereas Place du Canada follows a somewhat English garden inspiration. They are not Indigenous, but they follow the theme of English and French reconciliation. The Material is mainly pavement, a highly transformed and heavily constructed structure and the biodiversity is O.K. in terms of tree variety, but nil with the trimmed grass. Overall, this is not a design that is compatible with Indigenous ways. The main recommendation would be to take the statues down from their pedestals and transform said pedestals with elements that value a new era of non-hierarchy, with an Indigenous committee.

91 Historic Places Days. Place du Canada, 1967 ( Dorchester Square ) 1878. (n.d) Historic Places Days. <https://historicplacesdays.ca/places/place-du-canada-1967-dorchester-square-1878/>

Fig.40 Evaluation of Place du Canada - Dorchester Square. C.Sioui 2022



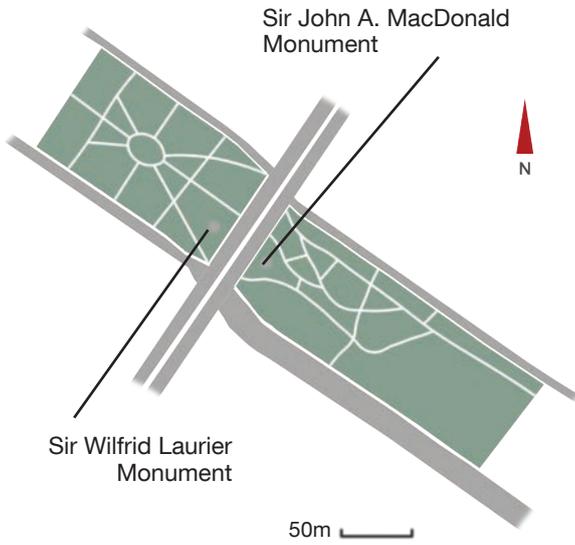


Fig.41 Plan of Squares. C.Sioui 2022

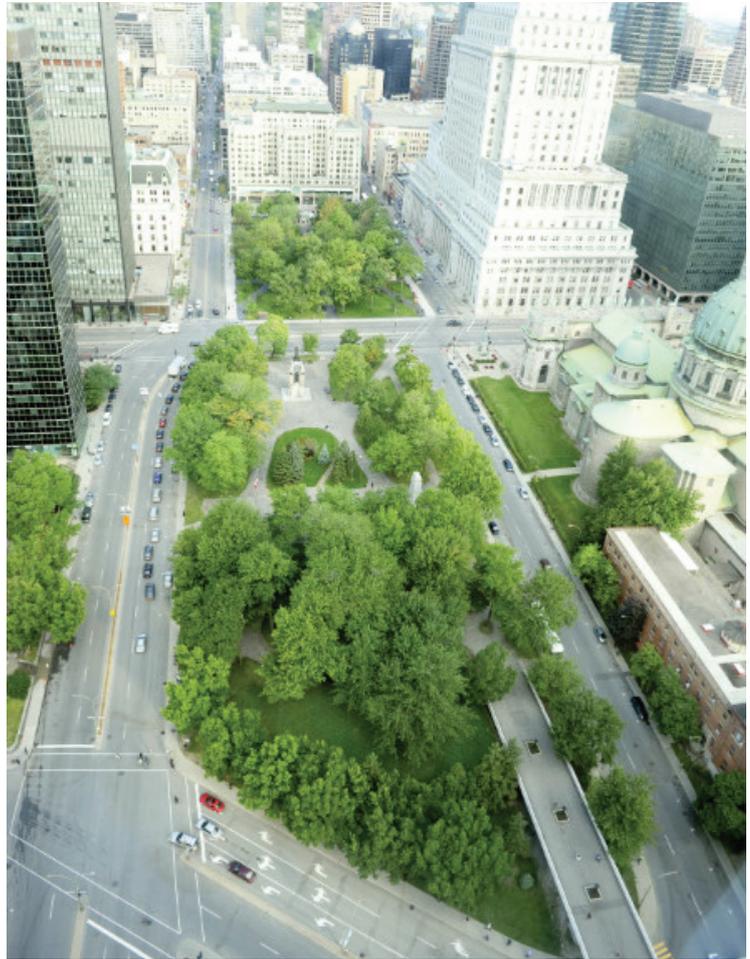


Fig.43 Place du Canada. Google Maps (Screenshot). 2022



Fig.41 Sir Wilfrid Laurier Monument. M.Dubreuil. 2010



Fig.42 Sir John A. MacDonald monument. G.L'Heureux, 2012

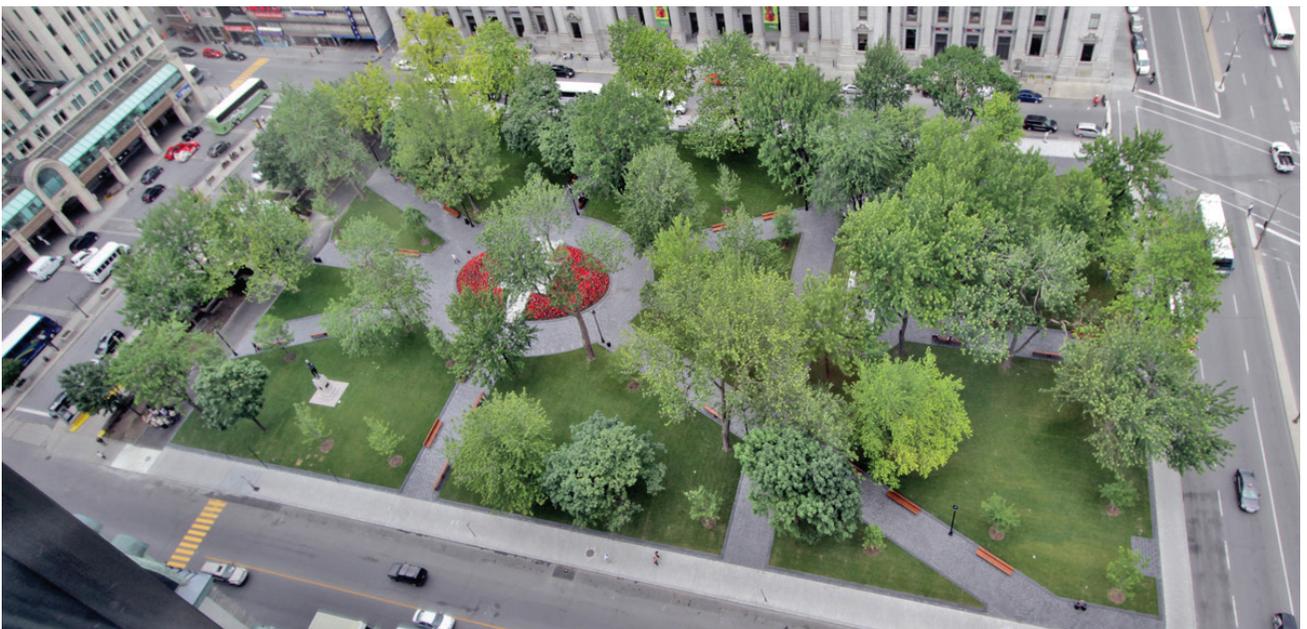


Fig.44 Dorchester Square. Google Maps (Screenshot). 2022

Parc St-Henri

“He’s standing on a stump to signify the land that has yet to be cleared, and he’s also surrounded by four disembodied Aboriginal heads which of course signifies the genocide that’s still ongoing here. This is a very racist statue. (...) Quite frankly, I don’t think anyone within the settlers’ society would tolerate having their own disembodied heads on a statue spitting out water”

- Donovan King

Inaugurated in 1893, this monumental fountain was dedicated to Jacques-Cartier, one of the first Europeans to arrive on the island and begin colonizing it. Although the artistry can seem appealing to the eye at first glance, the symbology gives a narrative of dominance and inequality. It hosts a line of design decisions that is especially problematic, positioning indigenous people and the island itself as inferior beings.<sup>92</sup>

With the statue of the full-bodied explorer at the top, above a series of small ‘elements’ that were conquered, the head of an indigenous person can be observed, spitting out water in the way that animals are often portrayed in these types of fountains. It is no doubt that this does not shed a positive light on Indigenous people. In fact it gives an impression of them as beings that are below the status of humans, and closer to animals. This representation is the type that continues to portray a colonial narrative that does no justice to its original and still present inhabitants.

This colonial rhetoric can also be observed in the choice of design of the space and its elements. As seen in figure x, the man-made structure is placed in the center of a circle of controlled water, with an outer rim of geometrically planted flowers, encircled by a ring of pavement. Finally, benches are placed in a way that is meant to observe and admire the artwork, and the trees are placed behind in a sort of backdrop. This series of decisions places the settler in a position of top importance, with the other natural elements as accessories to decorate and elevate the settler.

This type of design speaks to the hierarchal culture of dominance that places Man, or in this case, settler, above all else. This is not a value shared by most Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island. It is the opposite; it is non-hierarchy and the view of all beings as equal members of ever turning cycles of life. For these reasons, the function, insertion, Indigenous participation and art and cultural elements score in the red zone. Accessibility is on the edge between yellow and red, because it is physically accessible but not spiritually. In terms of shapes and material it scores in the yellow, due to the low level of rigidity and construction. Finally, in terms of biodiversity, the choice in trees and shrubs allow this variable to sit at the edge of green and yellow. Overall, this design is not compatible with Indigenous values and is highly problematic in terms of narratives. The author’s recommendation would be to find a way to rebalance the narrative in the space with the participation of Indigenous representatives.

92 Richardson, L. Local guide calls for revisions to Montreal’s colonialist monuments. (2019). APTN News. <https://www.aptn-news.ca/national-news/local-guide-calls-for-revisions-to-montreals-colonialist-monuments/>

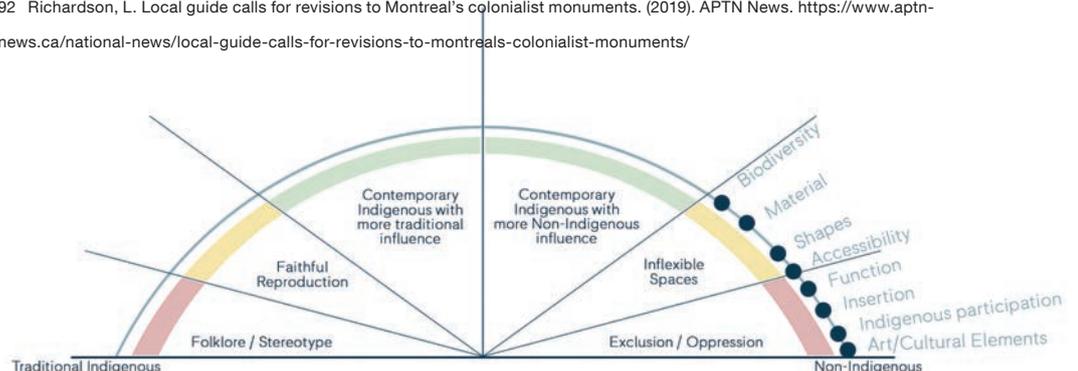


Fig.45 Evaluation of Parc St-Henri C.Sioui 2022



Fig.46 Jacques-Cartier Monument. G.L'Heureux. 2013



Fig.47 Severed Indigenous head. G.Beaudry. 2017

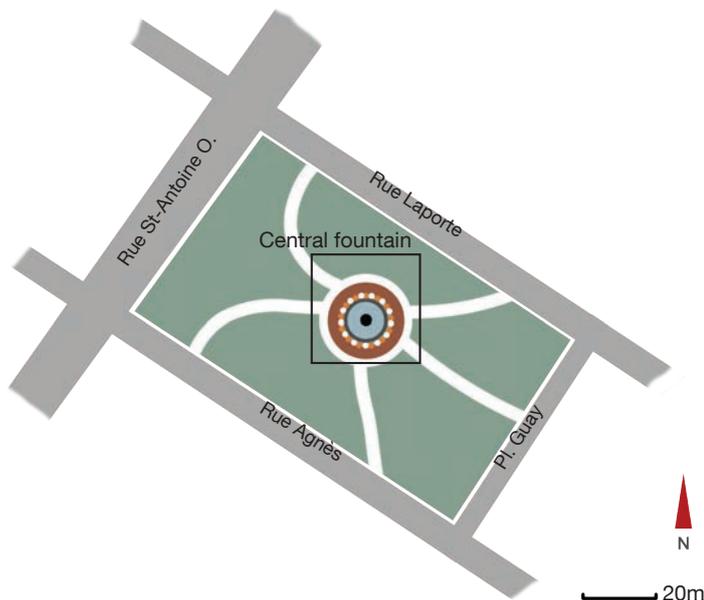


Fig.48 Parc St-Henri. C.Siouï 2022

Parc Arthur Therrien

During an interview made with the director of the Native Montreal organization based in the Sud-Ouest Burrough of Montreal, he was asked about what they do, what public spaces they appropriate and what brought them to choose those spaces. Parc Arthur-Therrien is the one that stood out. The park is around 115 hectares, 70% of which is composed of baseball fields, tennis courts and a community swimming pool. Although this park does not have visible, intentional, indigenous representation within its' design, this was not the main motivation behind the choice of appropriating the space.

What brings them so often to this space are the elements that respond to their needs for the activities that they host. For example, the parts that are very open, and grassy and visible from the street allow them to host their annual National Indigenous Peoples day gathering, which includes food, music, games and performances. These open spaces also host their summer camp program, bringing in a large number of children at a time. The wooded part of the park, as well as the access to the water provide them with the elements they need to teach the children about their environment and pass down knowledge. The accessibility was a factor, since it can be reached within 20min by public transit from their center. He mentioned as well that the Sud-Ouest and Verdun areas are where most of the Indigenous community of Montreal reside, which makes it easier for people to access. He observed that most of the community generally stays within a few kilometers of their homes, so it is important when they organise an event that it be situated within those bounds.

The main concern was a built space that could serve as a central meeting spot, with elements such as storage, shelter, and toilets. This is something they requested for many years from the municipality but did not receive until this year due to lack of available budget. In fact, the new building was inaugurated in June 2022, but does not have any Indigenous representation. On that note, he added that it would be great to have cultural elements that would heighten the children's sense of belonging, allowing them to see themselves within the space and feel more welcome and appreciated. He added that, these cultural pieces would help for educational purposes about their culture and history.

A final message that stood out in the conversation is the importance of people when it comes to indigenizing a space. The city was designed through a non-Indigenous lens. So appropriating spaces with their presence is what usually makes a space Indigenous. This does not however take away the importance of more permanent representation. In fact, he believes it facilitates the activities, especially when the design is made in a way that is culturally informed.

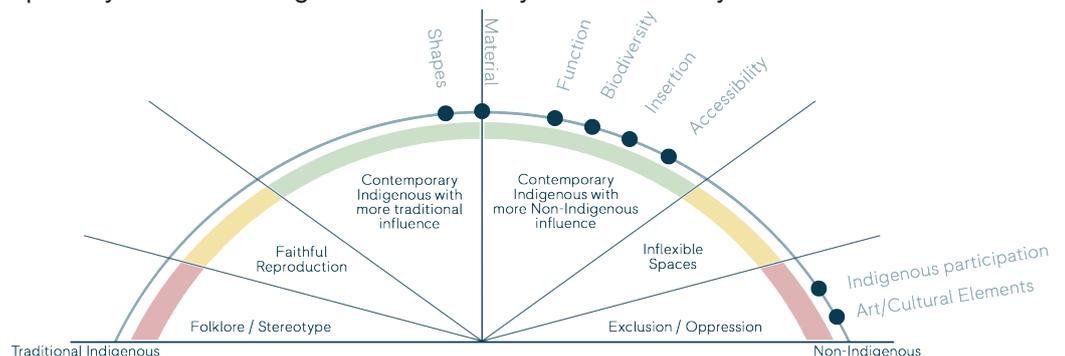


Fig.49 Evaluation of Parc Arthur-Therrien. C.Sioui 2022



Fig.50



Fig.51



Fig.52



Fig.53



Fig.54



Fig.50 View of the river. Bobby A. 2019

Fig.51 Service Building. R.Burgos. n.d

Fig.52 Mature tree frame. Jonathan C. 2017

Fig. 53 Large open space. Nick R. 2012

Fig.54 Parc Arthur-Therrien. C.Sioui. 2022

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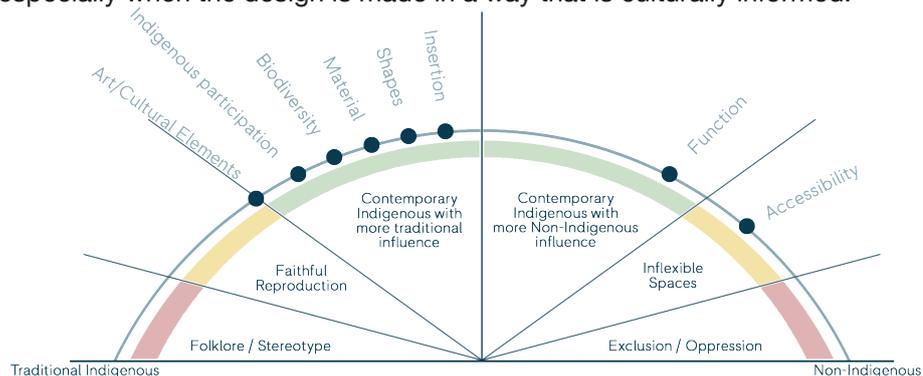


Fig.55 Evaluation of Jardin des Premières Nations. C.Sioui 2022



Fig.56 Faithful reproductions



Fig.57 Exhibition Space



Fig.58 Abstract Art Piece

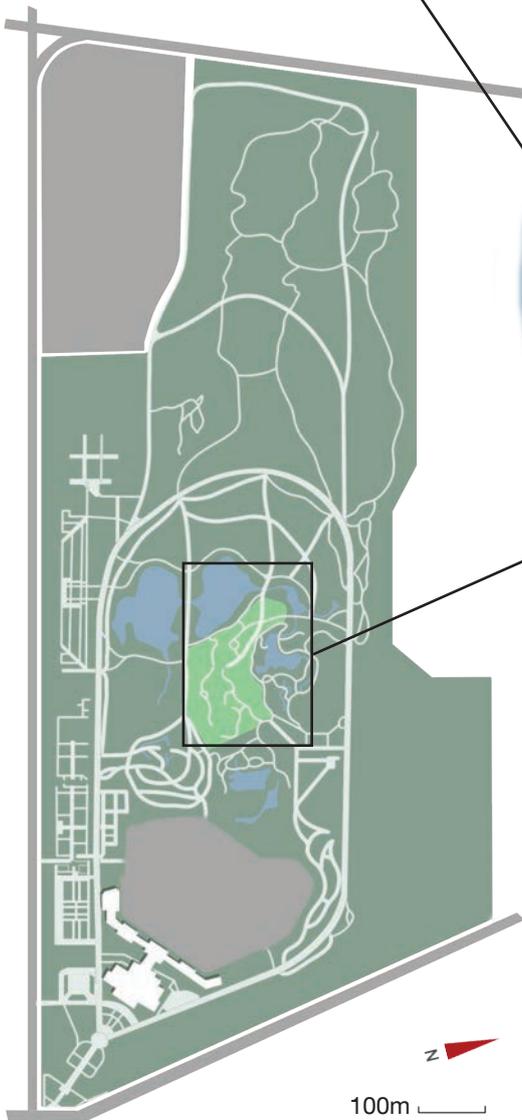


Fig.59 Botanical Gardens. C.Sioui 2022

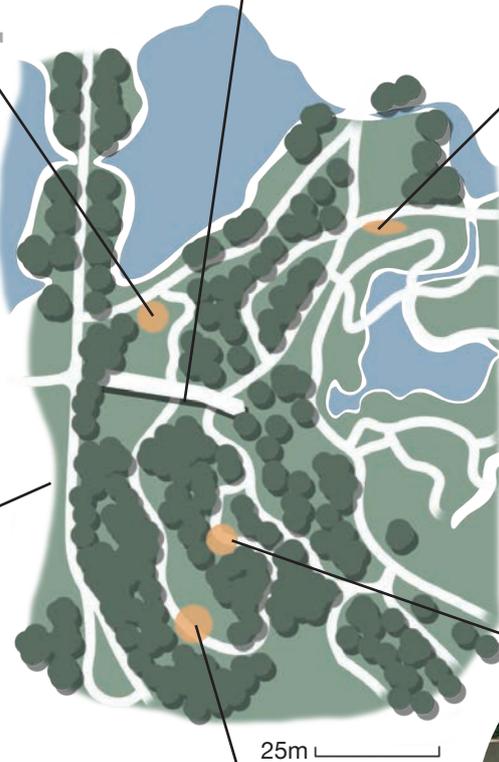


Fig.60 First Nations Garden. C.Sioui 2022



Fig.61 Contemporary longhouse reference



Fig.62 First Nations of Quebec

Safe spaces and settler landscapes

With clashing cultures comes a need for spaces that are culturally safe. The Salon Uatik is the office for indigenous student services at the University of Montreal. It is considered a safe space for indigenous students to spend time together without the stresses of the institutional environment and the micro-aggressions and ignorance of non-indigenous people. It is also a space to come to for assistance from the train Indigenous employees of student services. This is an example of places of encounter and sense of belonging for indigenous students within the academic infrastructure. One clear issue is the accessibility. Not many students are aware of it's existence or where it is situated.

Although the space is inflexible in its material, shape and accessibility, the Indigenous employees took the initiative of inserting as much representation as they could, by adding paintings of important figures, art made by Indigenous students, as well as books and publications by Indigenous authors. The inclusion of couches and tables for studying and relaxing, as well as computers and a printer provide the students with the elements that help them feel supported and facilitate their educational journeys.

This example is in an institutional infrastructure, which therefore serves one small portion of Indigenous people in Montreal. The public space is one that is shared by all. It is one that anyone can and will encounter every time they step out of their household. Some even live in the public space. Therefore, it is safe to assume that creating spaces of indigeneity in the public environment will definitely have an impact on Indigenous and non-indigenous people. If the space is shared by everyone, but only represents one group of people, then it, more often than not, will only serve that one group. But urban areas, especially Montreal, are filled with diversity. Homogeneity is therefore not a viable answer to the functioning and well being of a heterogenous society. The recommendation here is to create more culturally safe spaces in the public realm, so that Indigenous people have more than just a small room hidden in a university to feel at home.

Fig.63 Evaluation of Salon Uatik. C.Sioui 2022

Fig.64-65-66-67 Composition of Salon Uatik. C.Niquay 2022

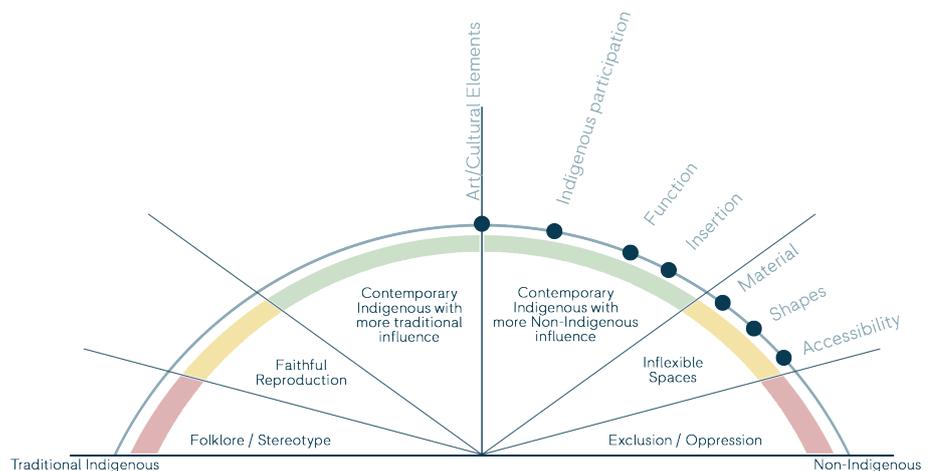




Fig.64

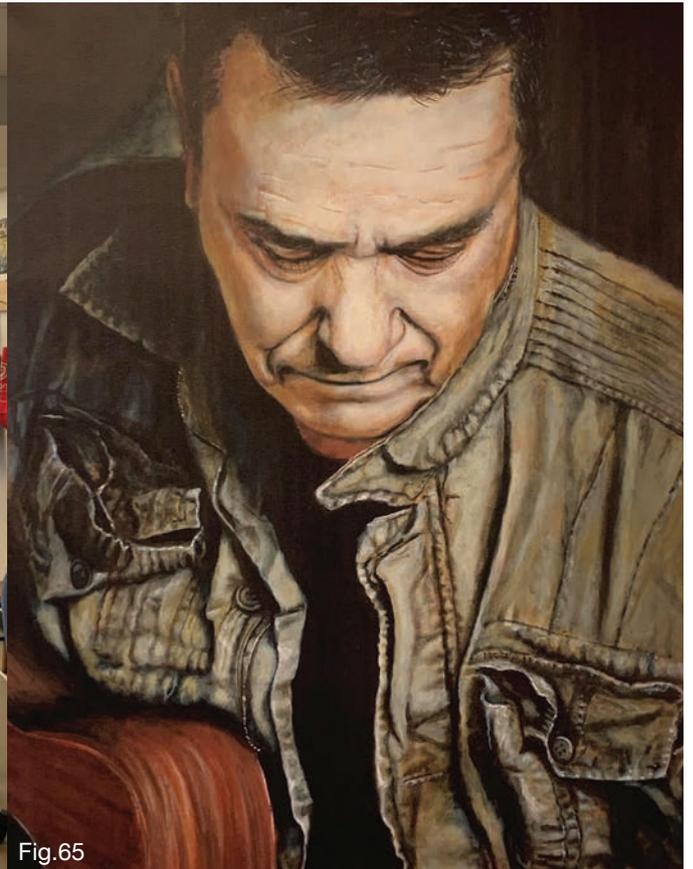


Fig.65

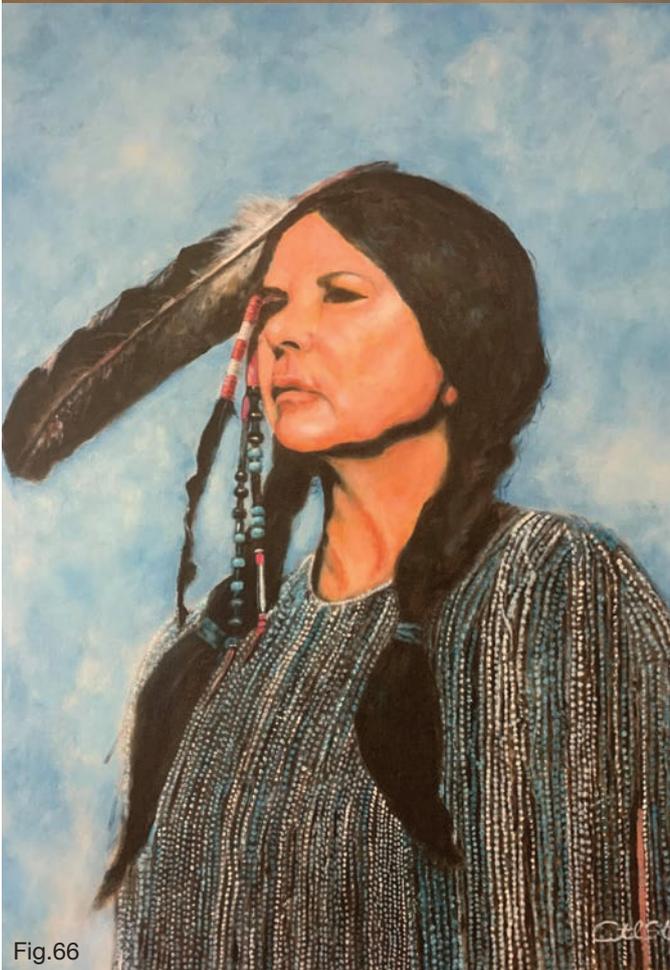


Fig.66



Fig.67



# Indigenous Design

After demonstrating the need for more Indigenous representation, there comes a new question: how does it translate into design? There has only been half a century of recognized Indigenous architects in Canada, so it is a fairly new concept within the contemporary context. This chapter demonstrates the design principles and philosophies of six Indigenous designers, and evaluates one of each of their designs with the scale and variables of the previous chapter.

### 6.1 The refined problem: representing Indigenous People

For hundreds of years, the voices of indigenous people have been ignored or censored, but stories are one of the main ways of passing down knowledge. Stories matter because they set the narrative and message behind the author's truth. The main aim of this thesis to empower the truth of the voices of the urban indigenous community and to contribute to changing the narrative, was proven in the previous chapters through the participatory workshops and demonstration of the reality and narratives in the Montreal landscape. The following conclusions regard connection, representation, narrative and sense of belonging.

One of the reasons why it took some participants so long to get connected with the indigenous community of Montreal is because it is invisible. This is an opinion that is shared equally by all participants of this research project, indigenous and non-indigenous alike. It is argued by Stéphane Guimont-Marceau in (title of chapter in book) that this is partially due to the lack of representation in the public space that could point towards the community and the organisations. Marceau argues that a First People's embassy could be a starting point, acting as a doorway to the multiple organizations and events of the community.

The indigenous participants have expressed a general feeling of being foreigners on their own land, with no sense of belonging, as there is no representation of their people, nor is there visible infrastructure that aligns with their values and practices. Whilst an embassy would be a clearly helpful and impactful structure, it is observed by Philippe Meilleur, president of the Native Montreal organization that to his knowledge, most of the community generally stays in their immediate area. The participants are in agreement that the indigenous people of the island are in fact everywhere on it, there are indigenous people in many districts of the island, and that they belong everywhere, as it is unceded land that their ancestors have walked on and taken care of for thousands of years. Conclusively, indigenous representation in the public space belongs everywhere on the island.

The overall consensus is that they feel that they belong here, but that the sense of belonging is often challenged by the lack of infrastructure to support it. Infrastructure can be defined in many aspects, including buildings, institutions, organisations, communities, and others. Focusing on the public realm, it was observed through the study of multiple spaces that the level of representation and compatibility with Indigenous values is currently low. This brings up the refined problem on public spaces and how they can and should be transformed to create more representation and a better sense of belonging for indigenous people on Tiohtià:ke.

### Problem

The island of Tiohtià:ke looks nothing like its historical landscape. About five centuries of colonial domination/colonization erased the cultural landscapes of Nations that have been present for thousands of years. Now transformed into the city that it is today, it therefore leaves its original people to feel like foreigners in their own land. Not only does this colonial landscape render the Indigenous People invisible, but it does not allow them to practice their traditions and cultures, furthering the censorship of their voices, and their stories.

The landscape always tells a story. The built landscape of Tiohtià:ke tells the story of colonialism and generations of settlers. It gives an impression that there was nothing before their arrival, perpetuating ignorance and erasure of a very important aspect of the island: the past and present occupation of Indigenous Peoples. This consequently has an impact on the allowance of continual oppression of this group, because without acknowledgement and recognition, there can be no reparation, and no reconciliation.

Recognizing the need for more representation brings on a new question: Where do we begin?

### Hypothesis

It is by exploring the works of Indigenous designers that one can begin to understand the various ways in which representation through an Indigenous lens can be presented.

### Aim

1. Demonstrate the diversity in which Indigenous design presents itself.
2. Explore the many interpretations and philosophies of Indigenous designers.
3. Place the projects of these designers on the scale determined by the Indigenous participants of Montreal.
4. Compare the similarities and differences between the Indigenous and Non-Indigenous designs for better overall understanding.

### 6.2 What is Indigenous Design?

Studying the colonial narratives, the spaces used by Indigenous people within settler environments, and identifying the terms and values that the committee adheres to, brings to light the clear aspects that make the ideal landscapes of Indigenous Peoples different to the ones they must live in today. Landscape architecture is a way of designing the environment around us. So, what then can be defined as Indigenous landscape architecture? Or more broadly: what is Indigenous design? In an effort to answer this question, six Indigenous designers and architects of Canada and Australia are analysed. One of each of their designs are also placed on the scale created with the Indigenous participants of the study, to see how closely their designs relate with the values of the group in an attempt to demonstrate the diversity of Indigenous representation in environmental design. The following are examples of Indigenous designers in settler lands, with demonstration of the philosophies and methodologies that fuel their designs.

Shaun Vincent (Manitoba, Canada)



Fig.69 Shaun Vincent  
J.Woods 2022

Metis graphic designer Shaun Vincent explains indigenous design as the immersion of their culture into all their projects. “Our connections to the land, history and ‘knowing’ – the understanding that the spirit lives within each one of us – is reflected in our process and our all designs.”<sup>93</sup> An aspect that is important to him is the strength of the relationships with his clients. Additionally, he sees Indigenous design as: “as much about the process as the product. It has its own voice and is both traditional and contemporary,”<sup>94</sup> He explains this aspect of temporality as the merger of traditional knowledge and oral tradition, with modern contexts and theories of design.

Finally, Vincent reflects upon author Gregory Younging’s first principle of indigenous design, which entails the following: “the purpose of Indigenous style is to produce works that :

- Reflect Indigenous realities as they are perceived by Indigenous Peoples
- Are truthful and insightful in their Indigenous content
- Are respectful of the cultural integrity of Indigenous Peoples”

Vincent reflects that “Indigenous Design is tied to the culture, people, and our relationships with the land. It relies on values of inclusivity, authenticity, respect, representation, and collaboration that are shared by First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples in Canada.”<sup>95</sup>

“I do believe that the process is deeper than that of a non-Indigenous project. It is richer, with connections that come from within yourself, from within your being. It becomes personal at times, where one’s own interpretation, of a bear for instance, makes a difference, and we have to reconcile with whose interpretation ends up being right.”

- Shaun Vincent

93 Vincent, S. Indigenous Design and Why it’s Different. (n.d) Vincent Design. <https://vincentdesign.ca/2020/10/23/indigenous-design-and-why-its-different/>

94 Idem

95 Idem

“Indigenous architecture is more than a style or a type.  
It’s actually a way of thinking, that we all think of that  
indigeneity differently and how it gets expressed through  
the architecture as designers ”

- Chris Cornelius, Architect

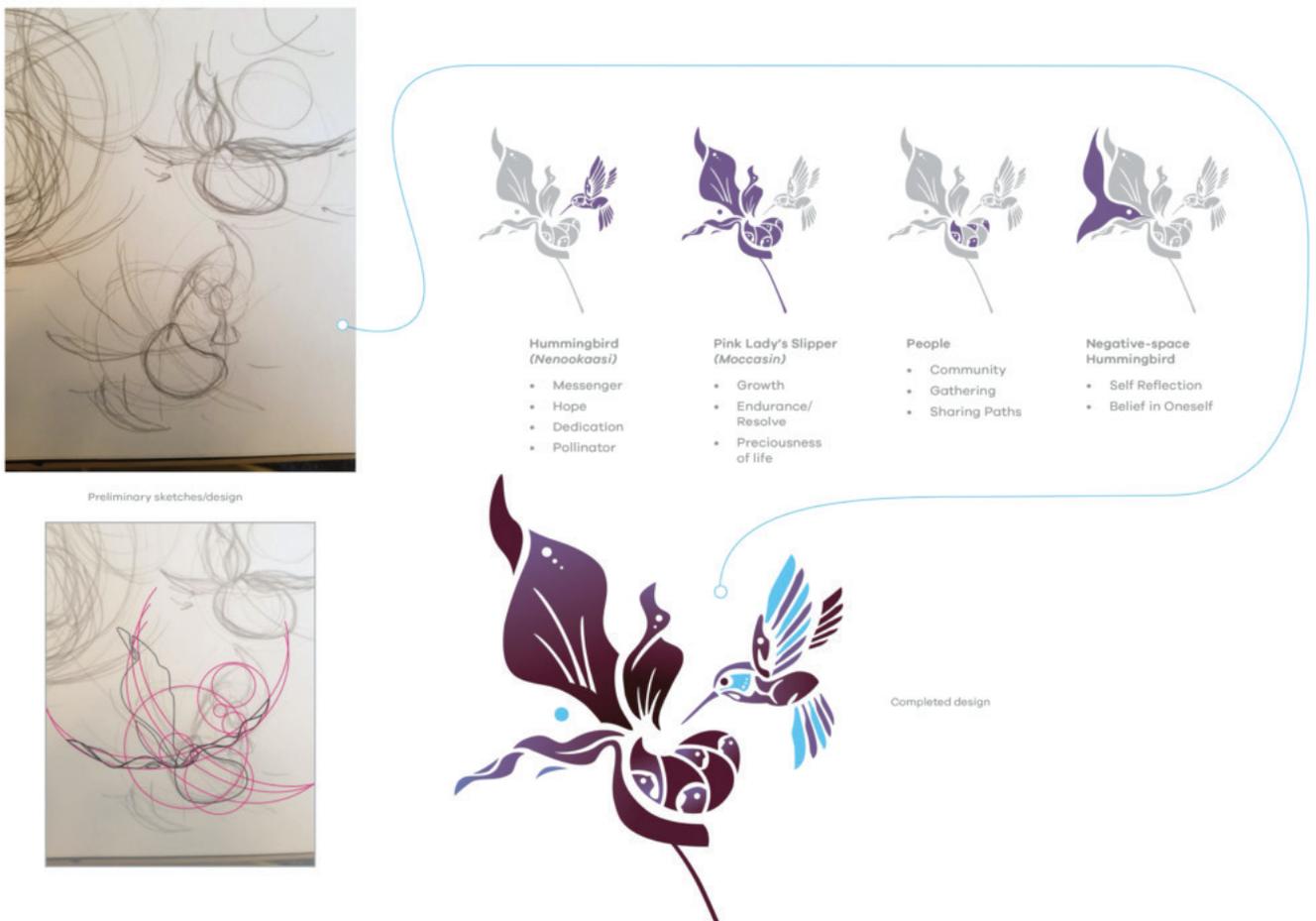


Fig.70 Hummingbird design. S.Vincent (n.d)

Douglas Cardinal (Alberta, Canada)

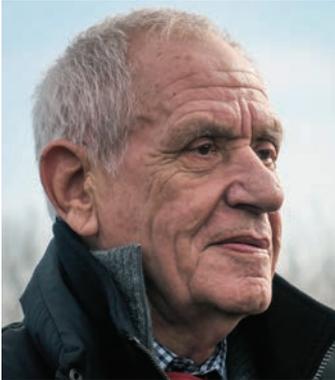


Fig. 71 Douglas Cardinal. B.Reeve 2016

“If you connect yourself to the source, you become truly a sorcerer. You become a magical being closed in flesh. And in that way we have this gift and power of creation, and we can create a better life, and we can create a better future for all of us. The elders’ teachings I think are teachings to the future and not just to the past.”

- Douglas Cardinal

The first accredited Indigenous architect in Canada, Douglas Cardinal is of Siksika and Métis families, as well as German descent. “Recognized for his commitment to excellence and his unique creative vision, Cardinal is credited with creating an Indigenous style of Canadian architecture, characterized by gracious organic forms, which continually challenged the most advanced engineering standards.”<sup>96</sup>

Cardinal speaks of the relationship with landscape, and how the buildings he designs are inspired by and woven into it. “Knowing that we shape our environments, and that our environments shape us... what kind of environments do we want to create?”<sup>97</sup> is his main question in every project. In a Ted Talk given in 2019, he spoke about how for inspiration he once “sat on mother earth and became at par with a blade of grass, so that he could communicate with the world around him”.<sup>98</sup> This resulted in the answer on how to build a roof, by watching a spider weave its web. He also explains how every project is a spiritual journey between the designer and the client, as well as all of the stakeholders.

When designing the church of St Mary in 1963, he combined the architectural knowledge and movement of brutalism, with his values and teachings as an Indigenous individual, by taking the style and using it to create forms that were closer to the natural curves of the landscape, giving it a closer relationship to the land. Although the material was not sustainable, it was necessary in the request of the client to prevent fires. Because this is a church, the functions were specific and the requirements for religious practice in the space had to be possible. He translated the light of God through the ceiling openings that let sunlight shine onto the alter and the speech pedestal.<sup>99</sup> The relationship with land stops there, as there is no biodiversity. Overall, given the context of the time period, this type of design can be considered an accomplishment of Indigenous architecture that demonstrates the worldview and relationship to the environment that an Indigenous individual might have and might differ from non-Indigenous ones. Moreover, this example demonstrates how collaboration between an Indigenous designer and a non-Indigenous client is possible and

96 Acl, J. et al. Douglas Cardinal. (2016) The Canadian Encyclopedia. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/douglas-joseph-cardinal>

97 Cardinal, D. Architectural Principles from an Indigenous Perspective | Douglas Cardinal | TEDx-YYC. (2019) Tedx Talks. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Q2iqZaNisQ&ab\\_channel=TEDxTalks](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Q2iqZaNisQ&ab_channel=TEDxTalks)

98 Idem.

99 Idem

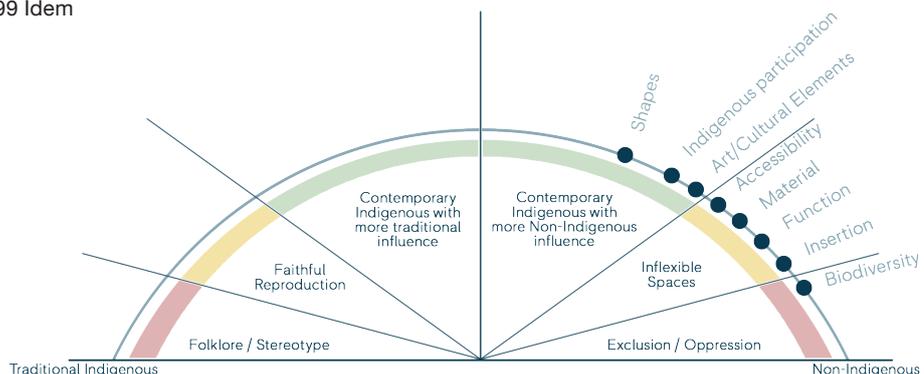


Fig.72 Evaluation of St-Mary’s Church. C.Sioui 2022

can create balanced results. Many of Douglas Cardinal's projects have been for non-Indigenous clients, and in each one he translates his traditional knowledge and view into designs that respond to the client's needs. This demonstrates that Indigenous is not only for Indigenous people, but for everyone.

The creation of the Indigenous Design Principles that he participated in was lead by the grandmothers. "These principles were defined by them because it's always the women that guided us."

1 – Every step must follow a spiritual path guided by the elders in the community.

2 – One must conduct oneself in a good way.

3 – One must train oneself to always be in the service of others.

4 – One must respect people's own traditional decision-making processes.

5 – Architectural form is inspired by the spirit of nature.

6 – When one plans for the future, one must plan for all life-givers for seven generations.



Fig. 73 (Left) St-Mary's roof.  
DJCArchitects (n.d)

Fig. 74 (Right) St-Mary's altar.  
DJCArchitects (n.d)



Fig. 75 St Mary's exterior.  
DJCArchitects (n.d)

Wanda Dalla Costa (Alberta, Canada)



Fig.76 Wanda Dalla Costa. M. Pajuelo (n.d)

“It’s about recognizing that cities have not worked to integrate all of the voices in a city. I think right now particularly in the US where we are situated, we by 2045 it is said that the US will be a majority minority, which means that there will be more non-Caucasian people than Caucasian people living in our cities. How are we preparing for this?.”

- Wanda Dalla Costa

“Member of the Saddle Lake First Nation and [...] the first First Nations woman in Canada to become a registered architect”<sup>100</sup> Wanda Dalla Costa’s design philosophy is strongly based on citizen-led placekeeping. She is also co-author of the Indigenous Placekeeping framework “which she describes as ‘process-heavy, place-based and highly contextual’ framework. It centers reciprocity, and the value that a city-building project can provide to its community.” Today, she teaches at the Arizona State University and is director of the Indigenous Design Collaborative which brings together a multidisciplinary team to co-design solutions for the Indigenous communities of Arizona.<sup>101</sup>

Dalla Costa spoke about the placekeeping framework at the ‘TD Future Cities Speaker Series: Re-Indigenizing Cities’ and said the following about it: “[ it is ] Led by citizens and lived experience. The people who know and have generational understanding of a place. Led with value systems at the forefront and by reconceiving assets, what we think of assets in the city, and introduces the more holistic measures of wellness. What does well-being look like to different cultures? Does it integrate spirituality? Environmental Health? Emotional health? The belief in relationality, connection of mother-earth, fellow communities, of colour, not of colour.”<sup>102</sup> She sees it as a “Different approach to city making that is very inclusive [ and ] participatory.” The framework and design process, illustrated by Rhonda Harvey, and inspired by the Navajo way of seeing life through four phases.<sup>103</sup>

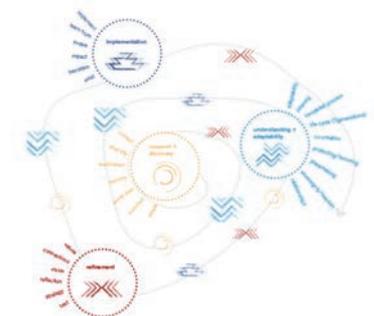
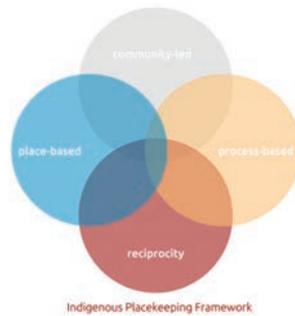


Fig.76a

100 Unceded. Wanda Dalla Costa. Canada Museum of History (2019) <https://www.historymuseum.ca/unceded/>

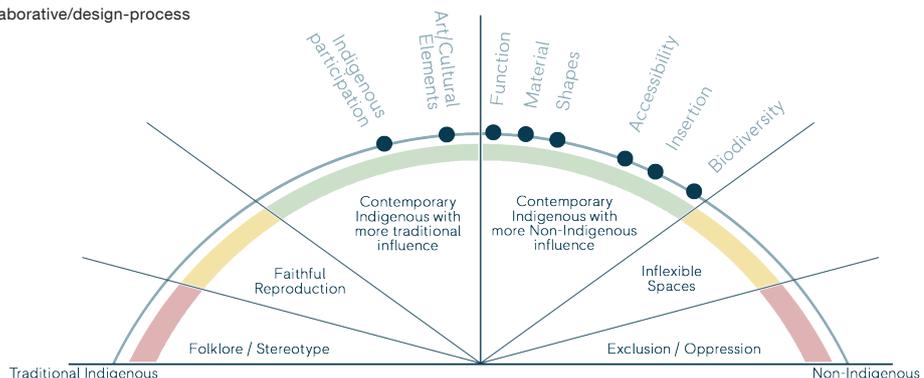
101 Arizona State University. The Indigenous Design Collaborative. ASU. (n.d) <https://design.asu.edu/research-and-initiatives/indigenous-design-collaborative>

102 Dalla Costa, W. TD Future Cities Speaker Series: Re-Indigenizing Cities. Future Cities Canada. (2020) <https://futurecitiescanada.ca/portal/resources/td-future-cities-speaker-series-re-indigenizing-cities/>

103 Arizona State University. Design Process. ASU. (n.d) <https://design.asu.edu/research-and-initiatives/indigenous-design-collaborative/design-process>

Fig.76a Framework Illustrations. Harvey, R. (n.d)

Fig.77 Evaluation of Chippewa of the Thames First Nation Heritage Hub. C.Sioui 2022



As principal architect, she designed Chippewa of the Thames First Nation Heritage Hub, in Ontario, Canada, which as of 2022 is under feasibility study. It is a series of four curved buildings placed in an open circle around a gathering space, and adjacent to a large open gathering space, surrounded by a frame of dense canopy. The interior design is mostly of wood, portraying traditional patterns of the Chippewa of the Thames First Nation, on a series of round rooms and spaces on two floors. The patterns and shapes of the overall architectural design and masterplan are balanced in terms of contemporary Indigenous design with traditional influence. The inclusion of the central amphitheatre hugged by and accessible from all buildings makes it a safe and inclusive space. However, going solely off the information of the rendering, the biodiversity could be higher as well as the strength of the relationship between the hub and the surrounding forest landscape. The transition between open and closed vegetative spaces could be more fluid. In terms of accessibility, the community on which it is to be built is not very large, and the general landscape is walkable. One can assume that there are elevators on the two-floor buildings. Overall, this project situates itself strongly within the Contemporary Indigenous area of the spectrum.



Fig.78 Chippewa of the Thames First Nation Heritage Hub Rendering. Tawarc. (2022)

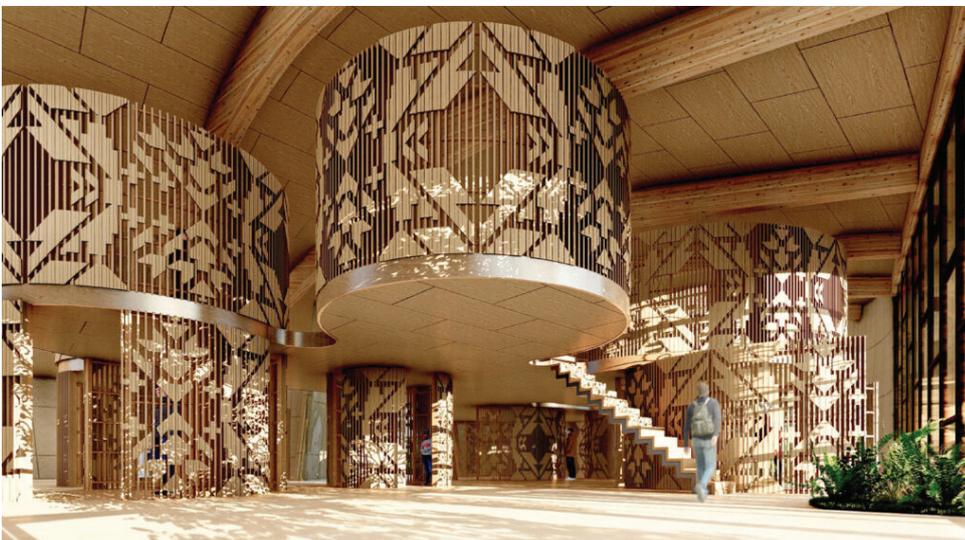


Fig.79 Heritage Hub indoor rendering. Tawarc. (2022)

Australia is a country that faced an extremely similar history of colonialism by British settlers, in that it oppressed its Indigenous Peoples into almost complete erasure.<sup>104</sup> One difference with Canada is that the Australian government has acknowledged the need for reparations towards its Indigenous stewards years before that of Canada. This allowed the healing process to begin earlier and for a larger representation of Indigenous Peoples to be present at this point in time. The following are two Indigenous landscape architects of Australia who work with their traditional and contemporary knowledge to create landscapes that help create a more balanced narrative and future. The more popular term used in their country is ‘Aboriginal’ instead of ‘Indigenous’.

Paul Herzich (Adelaide Australia)



Fig.80 Paul Herzich. The Guildhouse. (n.d)

Paul Herzich “is a multi-award-winning Kaurna/Ngarrindjeri Registered Landscape Architect + Public and Visual Artist who has a passion for the integration of Aboriginal cultures within landscape and architectural projects and he has a strong focus on the health and well-being, and representation of Aboriginal people, art, culture, and Country in the public realm.”<sup>105</sup> To him, reconciliation is about “coming together, learning about our culture, accepting our culture, being aware of our culture and being aware of who we are. We have become aware of who non-aboriginal people are and what they bring to things. It’s about just getting along together and moving forward for future generations. You know, it’s not just all about us.”<sup>106</sup>

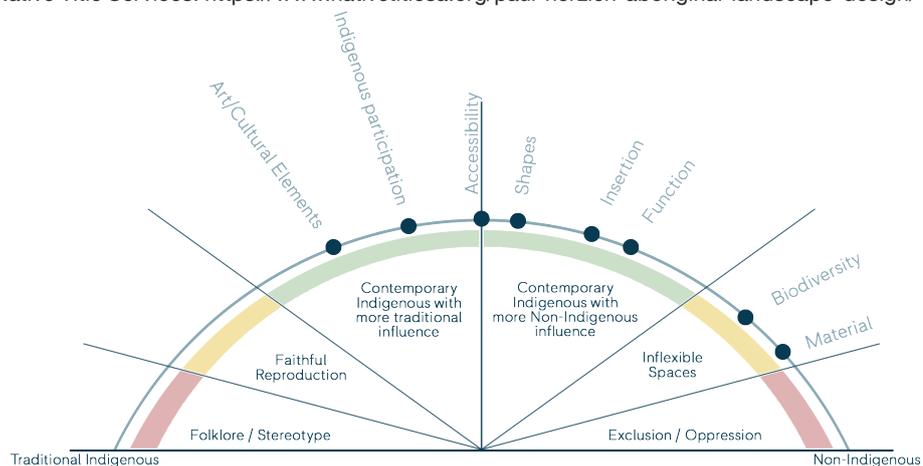
One of his focuses is the creation of cultural markers that acknowledge and recognize the culture before and after colonization. He says that they serve as reminders of the cultures that are still present. In some designs he incorporates language, accompanied by images, to incite people to figure out the meaning and gain a new level of respect for the elders and the culture. Moreover, his designs are meant to give an experience that takes the person’s mind away from their everyday life and the stresses that come along with it.

“For me it’s about educating people about the underlying later of the landscape. There’s more to the landscape than roads, bushes, paddocks, and fences. There’s a lot more history and culture out there, so it’s about acknowledging and recognizing country, culture, people. Hopefully I’m inspiring people to get a better appreciation and awareness of all our main aboriginal language groups within the state.”

- Paul Herzich

Fig.81 Evaluation of cultural markers. C.Sioui 2022

104 Wolfe, P. Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native. (2006) Journal of Genocide Research. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14623520601056240> pp.387-409  
 105 Guildhouse, Mantirridesign. (n.d) Guildhouse. <https://guildhouse.org.au/folio/QETwTboj/paul-herzich/>  
 106 Paul Herzich, Paul Herzich Aboriginal Landscape Design. (Interview) (2019). South Australian Native Title Services. <https://www.nativetitlesa.org/paul-herzich-aboriginal-landscape-design/>



An example of his strategies is the insertion of cultural markers at the entrance of the University of Adelaide on figure x. “A feature was the wangu (seven) large aluminium poles, laser cut with thousands of hand-drawn circles to tell an ancient Kurna story of the relationship between the Wardlipari (the Milky Way) and the Karrowirra pari (River Torrens).”<sup>107</sup> In this work, traditional knowledge is translated into space with contemporary material.

These seven poles are part of a larger project of five spaces that were added to the campus with the goal of recognizing the Kurna Aboriginal people. It was coordinated by Oxigen, a multi-disciplinary landscape architecture practice in Australia. The campus already existed, which meant that the general organization and baselines were already in place, making the possibility of design somewhat restricted. In cases like this, it is a question of adding to the space, in a means of rebalancing the narrative. For example, the building architecture is non-indigenous, as well as the already present landscape architecture. These seven poles serve their purpose, as they stand as tall as the buildings, and, although they are thin, their closeness and brightness create a grouping that stands out and grasps one’s attention, without the imposition that would come with one large opaque structure. Briefly put, this installation is a successful example of insertion of Indigenous representation into built, colonial spaces, without removing the face of the present landscape and infrastructure.

<sup>107</sup> AdelaideAZ. Paul Herzich integrates high-profile Adelaide city public art with his passion for Aboriginal culture and country. (n.d) AdelaideAZ. [https://adelaideaz.com/articles/paul-herzich-integrates-high-profile-adelaide-public-art-with-aboriginal-culture-and-country\\_copy](https://adelaideaz.com/articles/paul-herzich-integrates-high-profile-adelaide-public-art-with-aboriginal-culture-and-country_copy)



Fig.82 Cultural Markers at the University of Adelaide. Guildhouse (n.d)

Kaylie Salvatori (Katoomba, Australia)



Fig.83 Kaylie Salvatori Arcadiala. 2018

“I am hoping that one day Landscape Architecture will be a popular choice for Indigenous people looking for artistic careers, whilst also acting as social and environmental advocates. For me, working in this field offers a symbolic reclamation of environmental stewardship, and I love the possibility to influence the way our country is developed.”

- Kaylie Salvatori

Saltwater Budawang (Yuin) Landscape Architect Kaylie Salvatori is an Indigenous design strategist and director of COLA Studio. She has an expertise in Indigenous design collaboration, and is a “strong advocate of increased representation of First Nations People within the built environment industry, as well as advancing Indigenous co-design”<sup>108</sup>. “Kaylie has been awarded and nominated for several national awards and prizes, including finalist nominations for Future Leader in the Sustainability Awards”<sup>109</sup>

Her philosophy is in direct relation to the land. “I aim to centre Country in my approach to design. In Aboriginal culture, we have an ethos that if you look after Country, it will take care of you. As such, I seek to connect with this ethos in my designs and explore the ways that design can support the health of Country and community.”<sup>110</sup> She refers to Country as the traditional landscape and relation to the land. In this sense, she believes that there is a “need for Traditional Custodians and Indigenous knowledge holders to hold power in the design process”<sup>111</sup> which can also be referred to earlier mentions of the term ‘Land Back’, where certain strategies include the action of giving power of decision to the Indigenous stewards of the territory. “Contrary to many commonly held beliefs, Australia was not a wilderness, it’s actually a carefully crafted landscape which has benefited from thousands of years of Aboriginal stewardship. This includes elements such as controlled burnings and hunts, subtle care taken with planting and a soft touch,”<sup>112</sup> This is a shared statement when it comes to the North American landscape. Moreover, she believes that “both non-Indigenous and Indigenous communities have a lot to gain from higher Indigenous representation within Landscape Architecture.”<sup>113</sup>

108 Sustainability Summit. Kaylie Salvatori. (2021). Sustainable Building Awards. <https://www.sustainablebuildingawards.com.au/speaker/kaylie-salvatori/>

109 Idem

110 Salvatori, K. Cultural Concerns in the Landscape. (2021) Outdoor Design Source (Interview). <https://www.outdoordesign.com.au/news-info/interview/cultural-concerns-in-the-landscape/8477.htm>

111 Salvatori, K. Kaylie Salvatori. (n.d) Cola Studio. <https://www.colastudio.com.au/people>

112 Arcadia. Arcadia’s Kaylie Salvatori Reflects On the Theme of NAIDOC Weel. (2018) Arcadia News. <https://arcadiala.com.au/arcadias-kaylie-salvatori-reflects-on-the-theme-of-naidoc-week/>

113 Idem

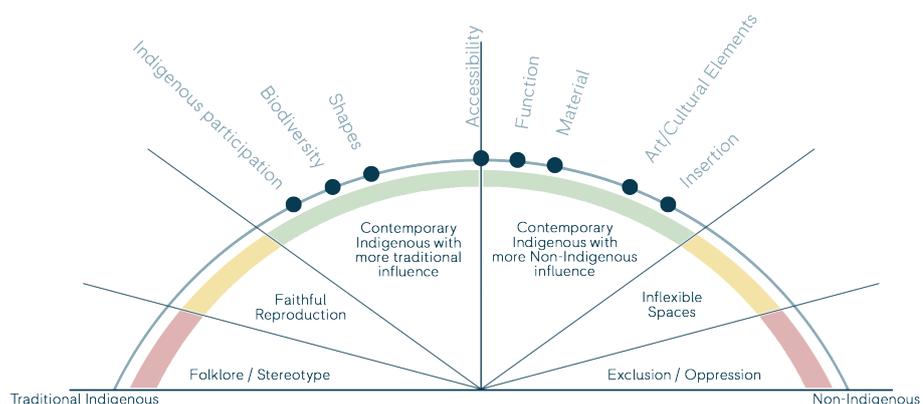


Fig.84 Evaluation of cultural garden and rooftop garden. C.Sioui 2022

This landscape architect's philosophy is reflected in the South Eveleigh Cultural Garden (fig.81) and the Community Building Rooftop Garden (fig. 82) where she works with Indigenous Elders and knowledge holders to create spaces that reflect the traditional landscape of the area. They both include indigenous species of vegetation splaced into simple built infrastructure, giving the green infrastructure the attention of the visitor. Additionally, the materials and shapes chosen for these designs are light, natural and curved, giving the spaces comforting feelings that approach natural landscapes. She explains about the rooftop garden that it "has been instrumental in advancing Indigenous concerns on urban biodiversity and native food education, as well as providing a community minded events venue." Both gardens take on the natural shapes of Country, giving way to an abundance of vegetation and use materials that are lightly transformed, keeping a natural feel in the space.



Fig.85 Community Building Rooftop Garden. COLA. (n.d)



Fig.86 South Eveleigh Cultural Garden. COLA. (n.d)

Matthew Hickey (Ontario, Canada)



Fig.87 Matthew Hickey Artscape. (n.d)

On the UN Sustainable Development goals: “This is one of the ways in which I think we can start thinking in a holistic way about how we not only treat humans on this earth, but how we approach the land that we use, how we approach resources that are around us, that help guide us in thinking about how we then approach architecture and design.”

- Matthew Hickey

“Matthew Hickey is Mohawk from the Six Nations First Nation and is a licensed architect with 12 years of experience working in an on-reserve architecture firm. (His) focus is on regenerative design – encompassing ecological, cultural, and economic principles. His research includes Indigenous history and the adaptation of traditional sustainable technologies to the modern North American climate. He currently instructs at OCAD U, for the OAA and the Canada Green Building Council.”<sup>114</sup>

In a conference given at the University of Toronto, he explains his process of design that entails studying the structures of the objects that his indigenous ancestors created to understand the relationship with the materials and how they were used for the functions of the objects in question. He then takes inspiration from the identified materials and methods behind them and translates them into building designs. For example, when he designed the extension call Odeyto at Seneca College in Toronto, he used the techniques and shapes of the canoe, using similar wood and bending it into a curved shape, creating a dome shaped hall. Moreover, the tiled roof is inspired by the traditional roofs of the longhouse. He took traditional knowledge and wove it into contemporary needs and structures. Relationship to the land, in this sense, is not only about living within it, but using the materials it provides to build the tools of life and culture in accordance with the way the materials are understood to function.<sup>115</sup>

The design of this building is an example that shows a successful insertion of Indigenous representation that is both contemporary and inspired by traditional Indigenous knowledge, as is uses techniques and materials of the Kanien’kehà:ka, and brings back the curved shapes that give the building a more natural look that inserts itself into the landscape rather than stand out. In terms of accessibility, it is a university building, so it caters to those who attend it. One thing that it could improve on would be in terms of biodiversity surrounding the building. Finally, as this structure is built with Indigenous ways and values, it can serve not only the sense of recognition and belonging for

114 Canadian Museum of History. (n.d) Unceded – Voices of the Land. Canadian Museum of History. <https://www.historymuseum.ca/unceded/>

115 Hickey, M. (2021). Conference. Design through an indigenous Lens: Decolonizing our Approach to Architecture. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMCaArTrP0o&t=2157s>

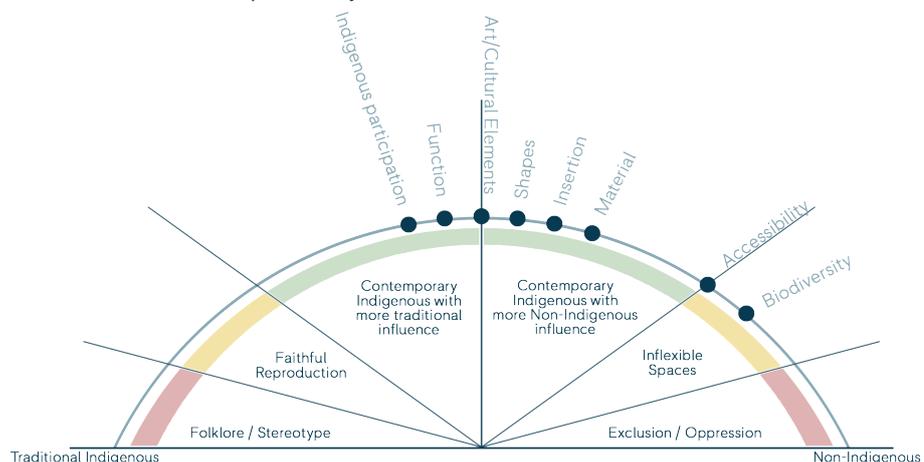


Fig.88 Evaluation of Odeyto. C.Sioui 2022

the Indigenous students, but also in the passing down of knowledge to those who wish to learn more about this culture and heritage. Matthew's approach to design rests in a series of 6 principles, called the 6 Fs, which all revolve around sustainability and non-hierarchy:

**Food:** as the center of indigenous culture. 1 in 7 Canadian households struggle with hunger. Growing food closer to people can help combat this

**Flora and Fauna:** Promoting places not just for people but all beings. This relates to biodiversity and how it brings enjoyment to all, respecting the non-hierarchy.

**Family:** referring to community and rethinking housing styles, especially where rent and housing is unaffordable.

**Fun:** referring to the ability to enjoy a place, whether it be about the act of being outside or creating spaces of play. This can also include formal and informal learning through the landscape and through play.

**Flexibility:** ability for cities and buildings to adapt easily over time, in a way that is free, cheap or cost friendly. This refers as well to the long term effects of construction on our well-being and on the environment.



Fig. 89 Odeyto Exterior. Gow Hastings Architects. (n.d)



Fig.90 Bent wood roof and wall. Gow Hastings Architects. (n.d)

Ryan Gorrie (Manitoba, Canada)



Fig.91 Ryan Gorrie Brook McIlroy. (n.d)

“I want to be able to share with my children that they can see themselves reflected in the built environment, something that I didn’t see, growing up and something that I think is really important for all Canadians to see, be part of, to advocate for and to begin that idea of a shared place, a true place of shared land, history, language, culture and all the things that we hope for, for our children.”

- Ryan Gorrie

This Anishinaabe artist and registered architect focuses largely on “the perpetuation of Indigenous culture through creative opportunities ranging from the crafting of traditional items for ceremonial use to large-scale landmark architecture.”<sup>116</sup> Originally from Thunder Bay, Canada, he works as a principal for Brook McIlroy architecture firm. In most of his projects, he incorporates traditional stories of the nations that are attached to each location. Many of these stories regard Indigenous relationships to the land that they are designing on, and traditional knowledge from the local collaborating elders. In a talk at Humber College, he mentions the importance of the presence of water, and the traditional usage of materials, such as birch and sinew, in the context of contemporary infrastructural designs.<sup>117</sup>

An example of his work is Humber College in Toronto, Canada. This project was developed in collaboration with Ojibwe Anishinaabe Elders Shelley Charles (Chippewas of Georgina Island) and Jim Dumont (Shawanaga First Nation). The main goal of the project was to insert the college into the Indigenous context that it was in, by creating cultural markers of the First Nations stewards of that area, and as an effort of reconciliation.<sup>118</sup> The intention was for these markers to “act as a bridge between cultures, encouraging learning and sharing of Anishinaabe stories in the everyday context of students, staff, faculty, and the wider community at Humber College.”<sup>119</sup> These include references to the “migration stopping points and cultural iconography related to the story of the migration of the Anishinaabe People along the Great Lakes”<sup>120</sup> as seen on figure X, painted onto a concrete pathway into the welcome center. A sustainable element can be seen on the left of the same figure, where a rainwater retention garden is installed to catch water fallen off of the roof during precipitations. This project offers a series of examples of how to incorporate Indigenous stories into a non-Indigenous context in an effort to create a balance of narratives. In

116 BrookMcIlroy. (n.d). Ryan Gorrie. BrookMcIlroy. <https://brookmcilroy.com/people/ryan-gorrie/>  
 117 Gorrie, R. Third Thursday: First Thursday Edition with Architect Ryan Gorrie. Algonquin College Student Services. (2021) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TQtakEgDqis&ab\\_channel=AlgonquinCollegeStudentServices](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TQtakEgDqis&ab_channel=AlgonquinCollegeStudentServices)  
 118 BrookMcIlroy. (n.d). Indigenous Cultural Markers at Humber College. BrookMcIlroy. <https://brookmcilroy.com/projects/indigenous-cultural-markers-at-humber-college/>  
 119 Idem  
 120 Idem

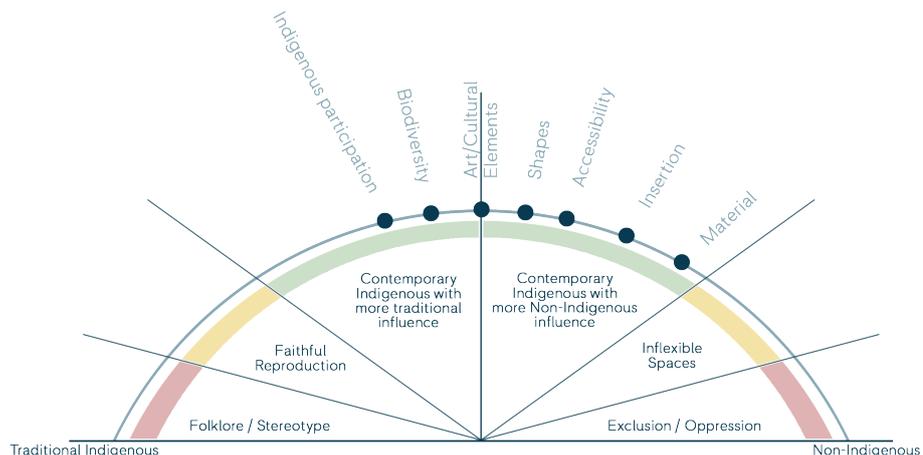


Fig.92 Evaluation of Cultural Markers of Humber College. C.Sioui 2022

this particular example, the representation is fairly abstract, while provoking thought and curiosity. Whilst the shapes lean towards more natural curves, sustainable materials, way of construction can be improved. Concrete and flat trimmed lawns are not Indigenous. The biodiversity of the space is large, as they have planted around 100 culturally and historically significant species. It is however concentrated in a small area. It would be beneficial to add more vegetation especially on the open lawn. In an intention of keeping an open ambiance, very low growing indigenous species could be an answer. Overall, this example provides the bridge in narratives and cultural representation.

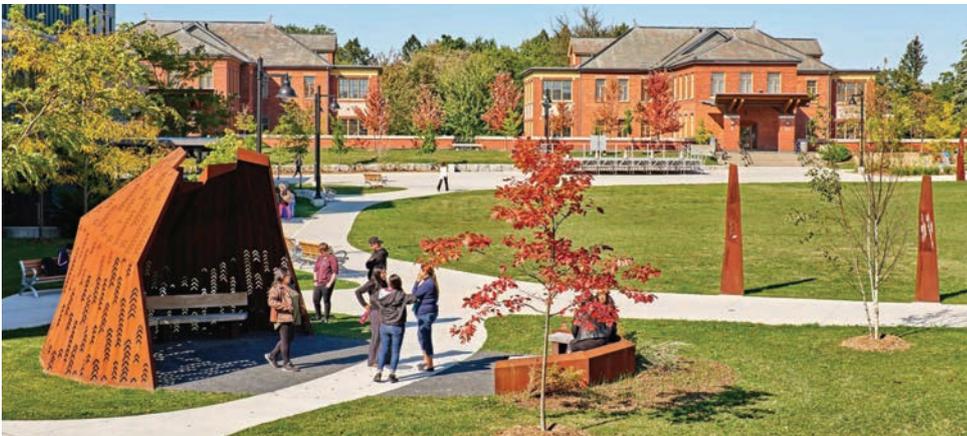


Fig.93 Cultural Markers at Humber College. Brook McIlroy. (n.d)



Fig.94 Medicine garden and path of the Anishinaabe. Brook McIlroy (n.d)

# 7

## Discussion

After consulting the Montreal communities, analyzing public spaces in the city and observing the contemporary tendencies of Indigenous architects, a series of conclusions unfold. This chapter compares the different spaces and their placements in the spectrum of compatibility with Indigenous Peoples. This lead to an overall view of the diversity of options and the general areas in which design can offer safety, balance, inclusivity and sense of belonging to Indigenous Peoples in the public realm.

### 7.1 Compilation and comparison

In the previous chapters, ten spaces were analysed and scaled according to values and themes discussed with the Indigenous participants of Montreal. It is clear from these results that the city is more often than not catered to a non-Indigenous audience, and features elements that are not compatible with Indigenous values and ways of life. In spaces such as Place du Canada, Dorchester Square and St-Henri Park, it is difficult for an Indigenous person to feel comfortable, and even more so to simply practice their culture. There are however a few places that make it safe to be Indigenous. This is the direction that is recommended to go in, with examples such as Arthur-Therrien Park and Jardin des Premières Nations. Examples across Canada and Australia of structures



Fig.96 Place du Canada. Google Maps (Screenshot). 2022 (fig.43)

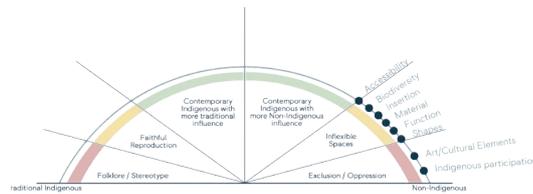


Fig.40 Place du Canada & Dorchester Square

Colonial narrative with insensitive representation of controversial historical figures.



Fig.97 Parc St-Henri. G.Beaudry. 2017 (fig.47)

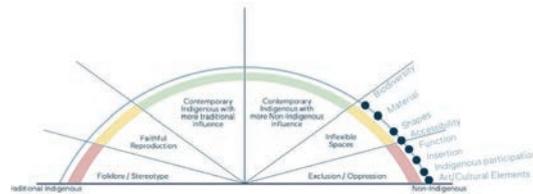


Fig.45 Parc St-Henri

Non-Indigenous space with colonial narratives and disrespectful representation.



Fig.98 Parc Arthur-Therrien. Nick R. 2012 (fig.53)

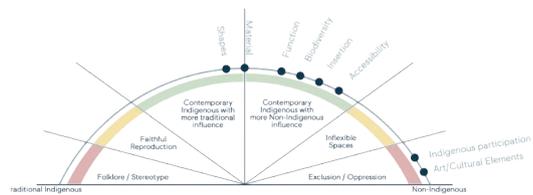


Fig.49 Parc Arthur-Therrien

Neutral park with no cultural markers, but elements that allow practice and gathering.



Fig.99 Jardin des Premières Nations. Jardin Botanique de Montréal (n.d) (fig.61)

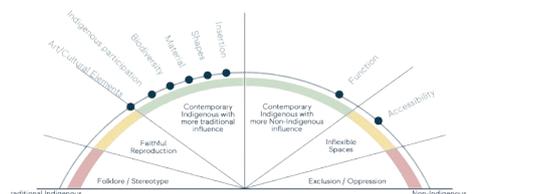


Fig.55 Jardin des Premières Nations

Museum garden with contemporary art, and faithful reproduction



Fig.100 Salon Uatik. C.Niquay 2022 (fig.64)

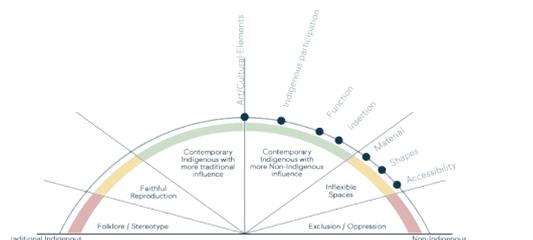


Fig.63 Salon Uatik

Safe space inside a non-Indigenous campus, with art, accessories and role models

and spaces made by Indigenous architects and landscape architects from the last half century provide a variety of ways in which Indigeneity can be translated in this effort of balancing the narrative and creating safer, more transparent and equitable places for all to be in. One does not need to be Indigenous to ask for Indigenous design. In fact, it is highly encouraged to create collaborations in which Indigenous people can participate and have a voice in the decisions that are made for future developments. Indigenous design is for everyone to enjoy, especially in the public space. If there is one value that most Indigenous designers and individuals share, it is that of inclusivity.



Fig.101 St. Mary's Church. DJCArchitects (n.d) (fig.75)

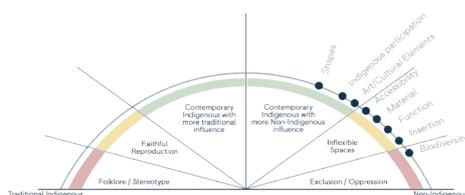


Fig.72 St.Mary's Church

Indigenous spirit in a brutalist style, for a non-indigenous client, in an inflexible space.



Fig.102 Heritage Hub. Tawarc. (2022) (fig.78)

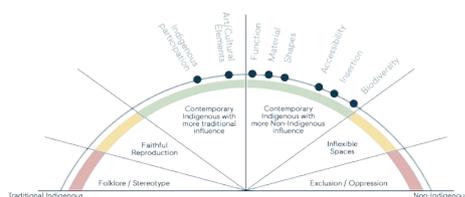


Fig.77 University of Adelaide

Indigenous cultural representation added to a non-Indigenous campus.



Fig.103 Cultural Markers, Adelaide. Guild-house (n.d) (fig.82)

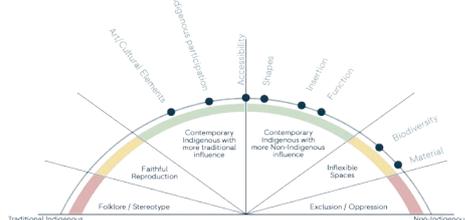


Fig.81 University of Adelaide

Indigenous cultural representation added to a non-Indigenous campus.



Fig.104 Community Building Rooftop Garden. COLA. (n.d) (fig.86)

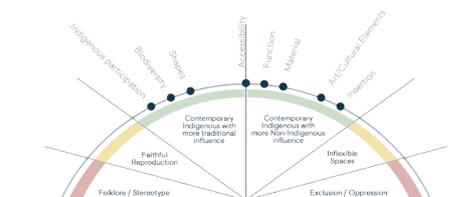


Fig.84 Rooftop Garden

Indigenous plant teachings and relationship to land through light construction.



Fig.105 Odeyto Exterior. Gow Hastings Architects. (n.d) (fig.89)

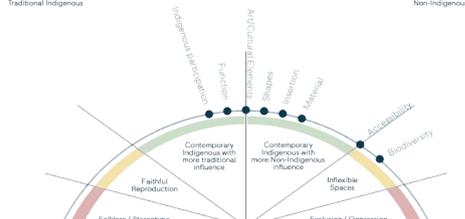


Fig.88 Odeyto @Seneca

Traditional Indigenous use of material translated on contemporary structure.



Fig.106 Humber College. Brook McIlroy. (n.d) (fig.93)

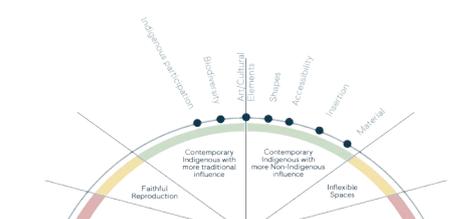


Fig.92 Humber College

Cultural markers with traditional shapes, patterns and stories on campus.

### 7.2 Spectrum and recommendations

The spectrum was used as a tool to better situate the compatibility of different aspects of the analyzed spaces and structures with Indigenous values and ways of life. Going from Traditional Indigenous Knowledge to Completely Non-Indigenous intervention, it is possible to see what is appropriate and inappropriate, when it comes to respectful and inclusive design. Combining the elements of the previous analyses into overall scores has allowed a final spectrum to be made, comparing the diverse designs and seeing where they situate in terms of compatibility and side-by-side comparison.

It can be observed on figure x that most of these designs range from the center to the right for their overall placements. This can be explained by the merely contemporary existence of Indigenous architecture. The only example that sits in the Contemporary Indigenous with more traditional influence sector is the Jardin des Premières Nations (First Nations Garden) as it made large efforts to recreate environments that are closer to the pre-colonial cultural landscape, as well as faithfully reproduce certain structures or the purpose of education and ceremonial practice, while incorporating more contemporary interpretations and structures. We are now at a point in time where it is practically impossible to design a space, especially in an urban setting, with more traditional than contemporary influence, as the environment is already heavily transformed and designed in a non-Indigenous way, and the traditional knowledge is scarce. This does not mean it is impossible, however. In fact, it is an encouragement to seek opportunities to create more spaces that share traditional knowledge and values.

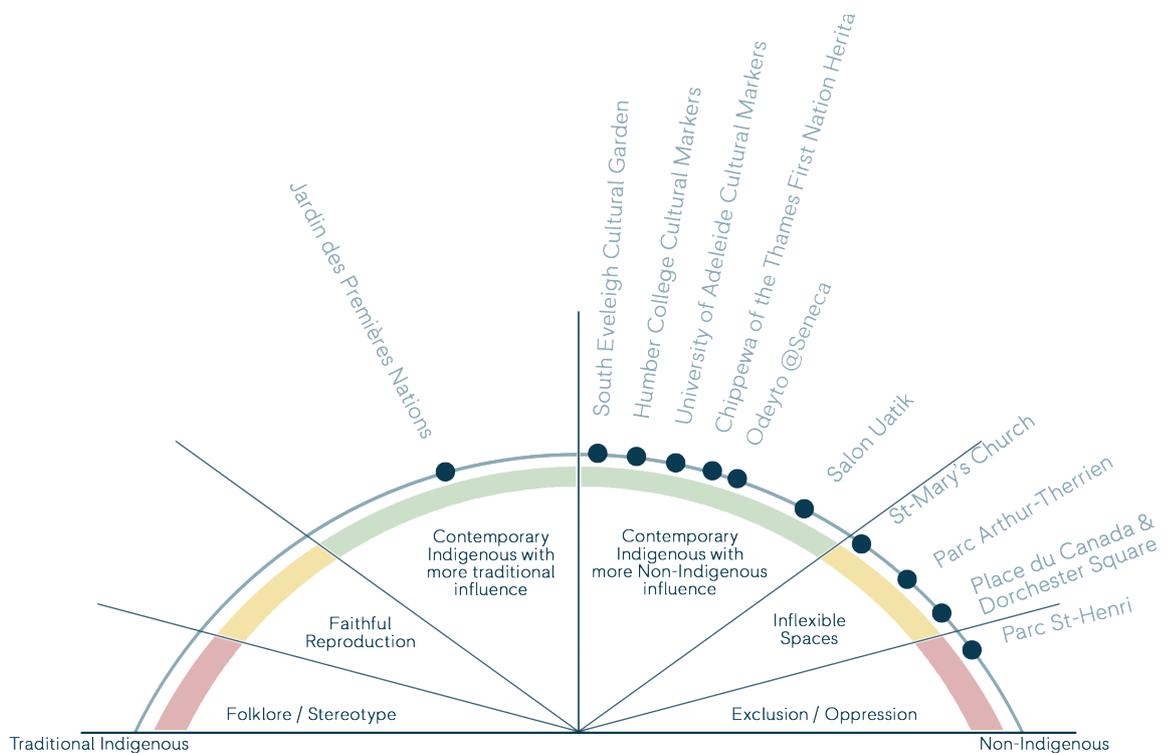


Fig.107 Compilation and comparison of the evaluated spaces. C.Sioui 2022

Although most of the Indigenous examples were made by Indigenous architects, it does not mean that non-Indigenous architects cannot participate in the design of inclusive spaces. These are merely examples of how the knowledge can be translated. Moreover, all of these architects created these designs in collaboration with Indigenous participants, elders and knowledge holders. They were team efforts and Indigenous lead. If a non-Indigenous architect wishes to create a space with Indigenous representation, they are recommended to do the following:

- Research: before beginning anything, recognize the land you are on and the Indigenous stewards of the area of your project. Take the time to learn about them and their ways, as they are required daily to learn and adapt to yours.

- Communication: in most large cities, like Montreal, there are local Indigenous organizations that either specialize in services for Indigenous people, create community projects and sometimes educate others. They are a good place to begin for recommendations of who to talk to and what to search for.

- Collaboration: from the beginning of the project with Indigenous members. Each Indigenous participant has valuable knowledge to share. It is crucial that Indigenous participants be included during the whole process.

- Leadership: make sure to make way for the Indigenous members to lead. Your job as a designer is to answer to the needs of the people that are going to be represented in the space. It is not possible when the knowledge holders are not in a comfortable position to share.

- Listening: things aren't always what they seem. Many concepts can get lost in translation when two people have different views of the world, even when they speak the same language. Pay attention to details and ask for clarifications. The answers sometimes lie in between the lines. It's your job to try to understand and translate their visions into reality.

- Compensation: fairly compensating them for their contributions is a principle of respect. Each Indigenous participant is an expert of their experience and deserves recognition and compensation for their time and contribution.

- Time: take your time. Although deadlines can be stressful, it will cost more to make choices quickly without thought, than to do them well the first time.

- Relationships: there is nothing more important than building a good minded, respectful relationship with your collaborators. We are all human, and we do not have a single correct answer, but we can try our best. That is what matters.

- Humility: although each of us is an expert of our field, we do not hold all of the answers. We have imperfect pasts and what is important is to not let our pride or our fears get in the way of moving forward together. The non-Indigenous project leaders and participants are recommended to take a step back and push forth opportunities for Indigenous voices to be heard and answered.



# Bonus Case Study: Arrondissement Sud-Ouest

Exploring and identifying the tendencies in which inclusive design can be translated has allowed a good base to lean on for future participatory projects. This chapter shows the first steps of a proposal and methodology for the South-West Burrough in Montreal. It is the continuation of the collaboration with the INRS and the Indigenous committee of the research project, as well as Native Montreal organization and Les Scientifines organization. This proposal is, as of August 2022 still in the process of development, and will hopefully be completed by 2025.

### 8.1 Finding a space with the municipality

The collaboration with the municipality began with an all-day group session organised by Professor Stéphane Guimont-Marceau, Professor Marie-Ève Drouin-Gagné, Jennifer Buckell, Carling Sioui and members of the municipality, mainly Aurélie Arnaud, acting Commissioner of Indigenous Relations at the time, along with a team of counselors. On that day, they lead a group of about 20 employees of the municipality around various sites in the city related to Indigenous Peoples. Some revealed negative representation, others positive, and others, spoke to the invisibility of indigenous representation. There was then a lunch at the Botanical Gardens of Montreal, followed by a presentation about the need of better representation of the indigenous community of the island, and a discussion period about what the employees have learned and what they believed they could do in their own every day professional practices to help remediate this. This revealed a general overwhelmth and a feeling of not knowing where to begin. However, certain ideas such as dedicating specific parks to indigenous communities and working with them to create the designs were generally agreed upon. The general consensus is that there is a will for change, but that it still seems like a big step.

After this day, the author was able to meet with the Sud-Ouest Burrough where they spoke about the need for a central public space to design with the indigenous committee. They were able to propose the Parc de l'Encan which had a budget but no design. Although the parc may be small, it is situated on an important boulevard, connecting multiple districts and hubs of the Sud-Ouest, and the fact that it already has an approved budget is helpful in a timeline perspective. Often, what delays projects are the administrative factors, so having these steps of bureaucracy already dealt with accelerated certain steps and made this space more interesting for the desired timeline.

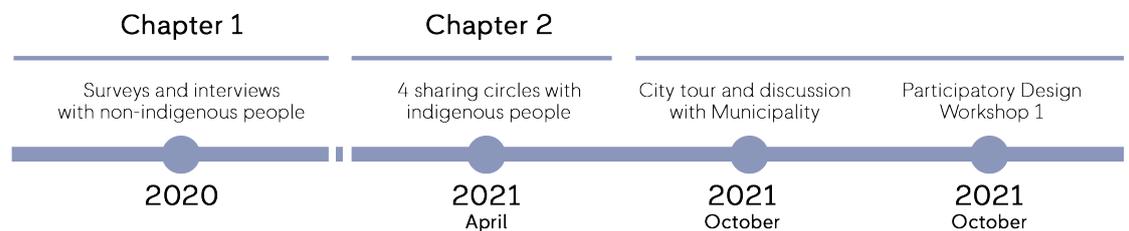


Fig.109 Proposed timeline of participatory methodology. C.Sioui 2022

### 8.2 Recruitment and workshops

Simultaneously, in 2021, the recruitment of the committee took place along with the elaboration of the workshops. The recruitment was made first by direct invitation of the participants from Chapter 2. Around 60% of the participants returned. The second step was an open call for participants through an ad and a survey that was sent out to Indigenous organisations in Montreal, along with publications in various groups and on various social media pages. The Indigenous community of the island is very small, and most information is passed on successfully through these platforms and word of mouth. In fact, word of mouth is what reassures the Indigenous community members that what they will participate in is safe. It is a network of trust and close ties, so it is important to gain the trust of the community in order to ensure good relationships and collaboration. One participant was even directly invited in person, during a community activity that the author attended.

Each applicant was approved by the author before being accepted into the committee. Every candidate filled a form with their basic information as well as their Indigenous background and signed a form allowing the use of the information they provide in the workshops. The reason why these forms are important also ties to the phenomenon that some people pretend to be Indigenous and create unease, which then affects the results of the workshop. Finally, each participant was financially compensated for the workshops they attended. Part of creating good relationships is to value the time of the people who participate in a project. If the participants are not compensated in some form, this could be seen as a form of exploitation. This is especially important when it concerns the indigenous communities. The value that these participants bring to the project is not only through time, but through energy, emotion, and knowledge that we could not access without them. It is therefore imperative to



honour their contributions with compensation.

### 8.3 Many waves of people and development

#### History of the Sud-Ouest

Arrondissement Sud-Ouest is home to the largest indigenous demographic in Montreal. It is composed of six districts that go along Rue Notre-Dame, one of the oldest and longest streets of the island.<sup>121</sup> Parc de l'Encan is situated in the Petite-Bourgogne district, a mainly residential area in between two popular cultural districts of St-Henri and Griffintown. The Burrough is known historically in the industrial development of the City, after the opening of the Lachine canal, which hosted a multitude of factories and exporters, attracting generations of low income workers, including rural Quebecois, followed by waves of Irish, Anglo-black, Algerian and Indigenous people. It is known for its availability of affordable housing, green spaces and strong community life.<sup>122</sup> In the recent decades, gentrification has caused increasing tension within the area, forcing families who have lived there for generations to leave their beloved homes. Efforts are currently being made to protect its residents and to find a new balance within the area.<sup>123</sup>

The districts of St-Henri and Petite-Bourgogne are closely tied, because they each used to be independent villages of their own, developing together and hosting families who would cross the canal daily to work in the factories and manufactures. This is why the two are laced with infrastructure from the industrial revolution, who have now been converted into offices and commercial usage.<sup>124</sup> There are murals representing the numerous members of the Black history of the area, along with streets and parks named after the Irish and Black people and cultures that have contributed to the history and present of the districts. Although this is home today to the largest indigenous demographic,<sup>125</sup> their history and their present contributions have not been recognized in the landscape just yet.

Fig.110 (top) Maps of Montreal, Arrondissement Sud-Ouest and its districts. C.Sioui 2022

Fig.111 (bottom) Diversity of usage and spaces in the St-Henri District. C.Sioui 2022

121 Imtl.org Rue Notre-Dame. (n.d) Imtl. [https://imtl.org/rue\\_montreal.php?rue=Notre-Dame](https://imtl.org/rue_montreal.php?rue=Notre-Dame)

122 Ville de Montréal. Découvrez le Sud-Ouest. (n.d) Montréal. <https://montreal.ca/apropos/le-sud-ouest>

123 Maitre, Lila. Un rassemblement contre la gentrification. (2022) Métro. <https://journalmetro.com/local/sud-ouest/2822702/rassemblement-contre-gentrification/>

124 Société Historique de St-Henri. Histoire de St-Henri. (n.d) <https://www.saint-henri.com/histoire/>

125 INRS, research project chapter 1

Bonus Case Study: Arrondissement Sud-Ouest



### 8.4 Accessibility and usage

The spatial criteria identified by the participants were the following: public, visible, central, accessible, promotes encounter, capacity for development or repurposing. This parc fits the criteria and presents a series of elements that exhibit strength and potential for a design that would reflect the needs and values of the indigenous community. Parc de l'Encan is situated in the Little Burgundy district.

Rue Notre-Dame, one of the oldest and longest streets of the city, serves as a connector of multiple districts in the southern part of the island. Parc de l'Encan goes along a more residential but still highly frequented part of this street, between the lively commercial strips in Griffintown and St-Henri towards its East and West, giving the space visibility, while still conserving a safe and friendly ambiance. To add to this, it is located near three metro stations, within a 10 minute walking radius, along with the new indigenous women's shelter and the Native Montreal organization.

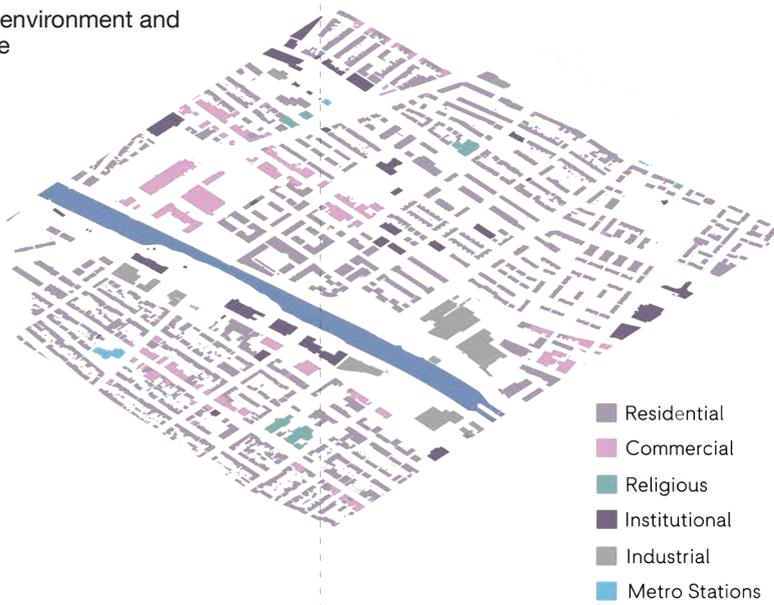
The 2-kilometer radius around the parc is mostly of residential usage, with a widely commercial area on Rue Notre-Dame, which passes by the Atwater Market, hosted in a historical building representing the industrial era of the district. A variety of churches and schools are scattered in the area, as well as local organisations, two of which are indigenous. Suffice to say that day-time activities are frequent.

The area is fairly strong in green infrastructure, with dozens of parks, and a green walkway along each side of the Lachine Canal, although the commercial and industrial areas seem to lack trees and permeable surface. The canal can easily be accessed within a few minutes from the park down rue Georges-Vanier.

Main circulation roads and services



Built environment and usage



Green spaces and trees



Fig.112 Environmental analysis layers. C.Sioui 2022

### 8.5 Sewing the seeds through 11 spatial interventions

The Indigenous community of this city has been noticed to have a tendency to stay in their general neighbourhoods. In order to create a sense of belonging and visibility, it was logical to choose spaces in the 15 minute walking radius between Lionel-Groulx, Georges-Vanier and Charlevoix metro stations, which encompass popular commercial and cultural areas for residents and visitors, both Indigenous and Non-Indigenous.

Eleven spaces were chosen to tell the stories of the 11 nations in the area currently known as the province of Quebec. They were identified according to their location, potential and type of usage. The types of spaces are parks, metro stations and high frequency spaces of gathering or transit, in accordance to the criteria identified by the committee. Additionally, each space has multiple audiences, and have designs adapted to each. Because they are public, the interventions that are made in them serve both Indigenous People and Non-Indigenous people. They are places of gathering that prioritize the Indigenous narrative and values, whilst welcoming all people, which is additionally due to the value of inclusivity that is shared amongst the committee. They serve to create visibility of the nations, teaching those who look about a story of that nation with elements chosen by members of the nations in question. Moreover, biodiversity is an important part of the original cultural landscape of the island, so bringing it into each space will simultaneously serve all who enter, and further the balance between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous landscapes. Finally, these spaces are designed in ways that allow practices that are intuitive to Indigenous Peoples, like sitting on the ground, being in direct contact with natural elements, and healing.

One space was chosen as the first example of how to intervene and design in an Indigenous way, following the values of stories, environment and inclusivity. Space 11, Parc de l'Encan, represents the Kanien'keha:ka, recognized stewards of the island of Tiohtià:ke.

## Bonus Case Study: Arrondissement Sud-Ouest

The 11 Indigenous Nations in the region known as Quebec



- ... (Inuit)
- ᓇᓃᓂᓴ (Naskapi)
- ... (Cree)
- ... (Innu)
- ... (Algonquin)
- ATIKAMEKW ASKI (Atikamekw)
- KANIEN'KEHA:KA (Mohawk)
- ... (Abenaki)
- WENDAT (Huron-Wendat)
- ... (Maliseet)
- MI'KMAQ (Micmac)

Types of space combinations



Purposes

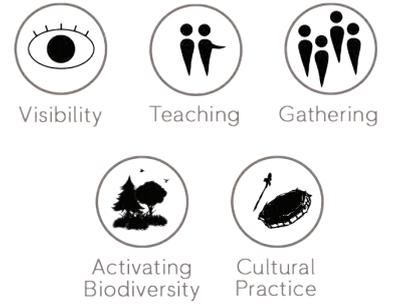


Fig.113 District concept around the First Nations and Inuit

### **8.6 Three stories (Workshop 3)**

After identifying the values and elements in the first two workshops, the participants were asked to take them into account and decide on which concept and elements would be best suited for the chosen space. Because the importance of stories was highlighted in the values, these were the inspirations of each concept. The strategy in presenting the concepts was to go from most to least literal in choice of metaphors and physical translation onto the landscape. The elements that were included in all of the designs were the same as the ones that were identified in the second workshop. They can be observed on figure X.

#### Concept 1: Follow the Corn

The first concept is called “Follow the Corn” which tells the story that one Kaniénkeha’ka elder refers to when one asks about “where we come from”. He explains that wherever our people migrated, the corn went with them and evolved according to the people and the land context. According to studies about the evolution of corn culture, the ancestor of this plant is the Teocinte, from which the hundreds of corn species originated. This ancestral plant was found in Mexico and northern South-American regions. It was first cultivated and engineered in those regions and evolved with time towards the North and South, with its Peoples.

This story is translated onto the park in a series of gathering spaces and stone placements representing the main places and Peoples that relate to the story. The stones are the chosen material as a reference to the stone hard texture of the teocinte plant. Additionally, the teocinte pattern can be seen on the paths leading to and between the gathering spaces. The spaces themselves represent northern South-America, Mexico, Tiohtià:ke, and the Great North, where the paths continue, but the teocinte patterns stop, because the corn did not grow that high in the hemisphere. Finally, a water garden is placed between the two ‘continents’ to represent the Caribbean area islands.

The committee very much liked this concept. What stood out to them was the elevated deck, the Northern water element with a hint of play and the visual aspect, that helped tell the story in the space. The gathering space with the fire was a given, so there was no comment on that. They did not however choose this concept because it to them it deserved a bigger space and was not adequate for this one. They do wish however that this concept become reality in a place like Parc Jean-Drapeau.

Bonus Case Study: Arrondissement Sud-Ouest

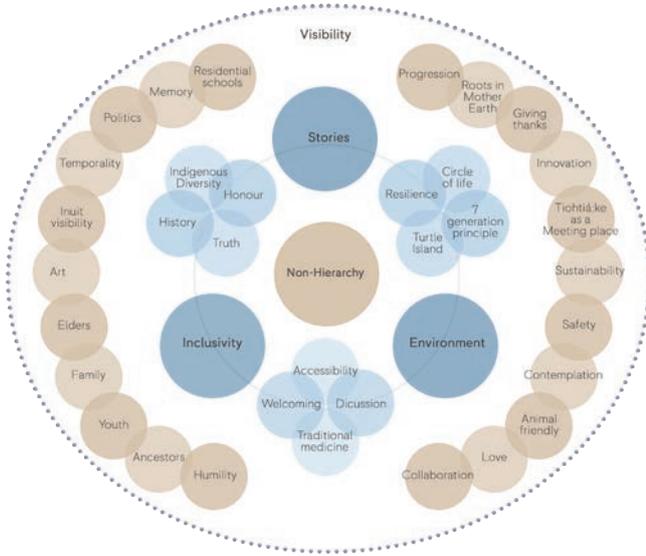


Fig.31 Values for the public space design C.Sioui 2022



Fig.32 Elements for the public space design C.Sioui 2022

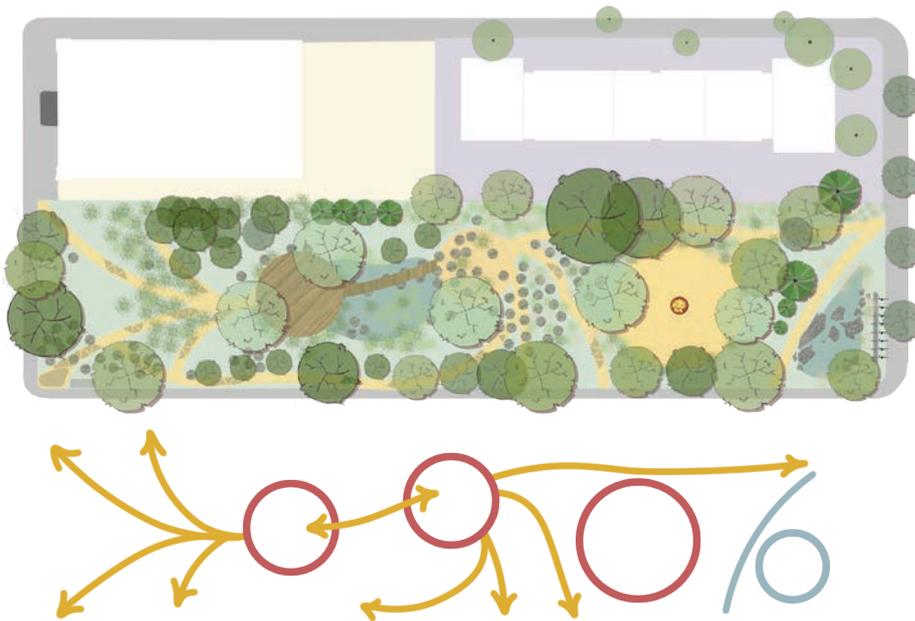


Fig.114 Concept illustration: Follow the Corn

### Concept 2: Otsirà:ke - Where the Fire Is

'Otsirà:ke' is a Kanienkeha word for 'where the fire is' which is also synonymous with 'where the people are' and was the name of the village that existed on the island, back then. It was and still is where the people gather and hosted the Kanienkeha:ka village of Otsirà:ke, represented in the second concept in the following way. From the South-West is a rainwater garden with two paths, representing the river that splits and hugs the island of Tiohtià:ke, the gathering space in the form of a longhouse. This structure is where the fire was and where the people gathered. As Tiohtià:ke has always been a connector for the Peoples around the area, the 10 First Nations and the Inuit are represented by 11 columns, that are each designated to be designed by artists of each respective People and watch over the gathering space. The rainwater garden is semi-humid, changing between dry and wet, depending on the climate, giving it a year-round livelihood and access by a slightly elevated path. The goal with the thick vegetation and added trees is to take a break from the noise and greyness of the city and bring back the serenity that was once there.

This was the preferred and overall chosen concept by the committee. They agreed that this story, being the origin story of the island would be a good first step towards culturally representative spaces on the island. They also enjoyed the simplicity and the closeness to the more natural infrastructure of the design, along with the representation of the nations and the metaphore of the longhouse being where the fire is. Finally, the rainwater garden was attractive for its serene qualities.

### Concept 3: Memory of the Missing

The final concept is inspired by the story of the stolen White Pine, and is entitled 'Memory of the Missing'. It is a metaphor for the resilience of the Indigenous People of Turtle Island. The story goes that the Great White Pine is considered sacred to the Kanienkeha'ka, as it is the connection to the sky world and the ancestors. There used to be thousands along the St-Lawrence river. The settlers saw them as good wood for boats and cut them all down. The spaces created in the parc represent 3 more groups that were taken and that we hope to bring back and remember. The playground brings back the children of the residential schools. The gathering space under the great white pine brings back the culture and connection to our ancestors, and the garden to the North-East brings back the missing and murdered indigenous women. Finally, the shelter brings back knowledge and comfort, and the Inuit sports space, connects our Northern brothers and sisters and brings back play and friendly competition. These spaces are created by the tree stumps and are connected by the silhouette of the fallen pine, in a way of saying that we are still present and make the best out of what is left.

This was an emotional concept, with a strong message that the members felt Canada was not ready for just yet. They also agreed that this concept would merit a larger and more visible space. This author suggests a space such as Place du Canada. What stood out as elements to include in the final concept are the great white pine, the shelter and the play area.

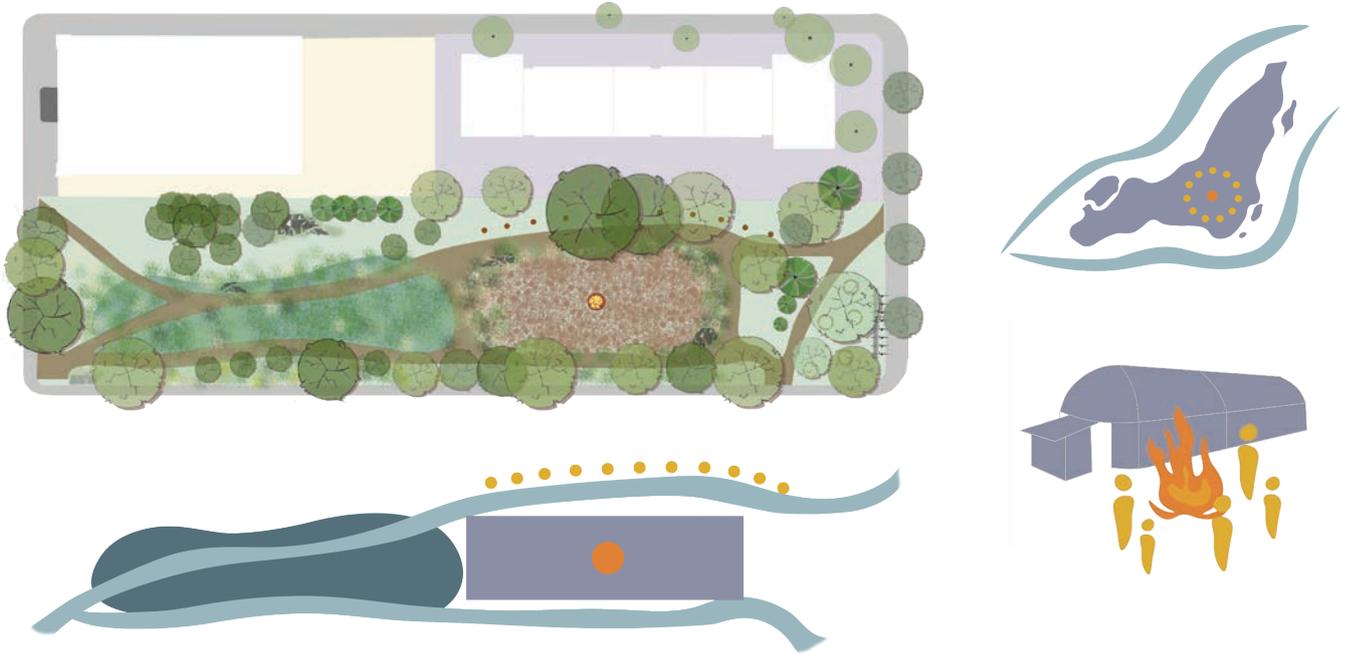


Fig.115 Concept illustration: Otsirà:ke - Where the fire is



Fig.116 Concept illustration: Memory of the missing

### 8.7 Final concept

The Kanienkeha:ka are the recognized stewards of Tiohtià:ke, also known as Montreal. They used to have a village called Otsirà:ke, which signifies 'where the fire is'. This expression is also similar to that of 'where the people are' or 'where we gather'. Tiohtià:ke has been an island of gathering of many nations across Turtle Island since long before the arrival of European settlers. This is the chosen story that is depicted in Parc de l'Encan.

The way Indigenous Peoples and designers have generally proven to see and design their land is by recognizing patterns, their own identities and needs, and weaving them into each other, with respect to what is present, in a non-hierarchical way. An example consists of observing the present elements, how they work and enhancing their talents in a way that works with them and simultaneously helps the community - that being the people, as well as fauna, flora and all present elements.

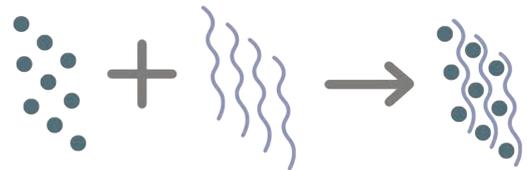
Parc de l'Encan has a form that can be enhanced into a small oasis away from the harsh structures of the city. It presents three strong elements, such as the strong tree frame, a series of mounds that create a frequently submerged area and a paved delimitation that is attached to a series of small paths created by frequent walking patterns of visitors. These are in a way the three major elements that make the first "pattern" in the context of the concept.

The second element is that of the Kanienkeha:ka and the story of Otsirà:ke, the village that used to be on Tiohtià:ke. 'Otsirà:ke' is a Kanienkeha word for 'where the fire is' which is also synonymous with 'where the people are' and was the name of the village that existed on the island, back then. It was and still is where the people gather and hosted the Kanienkeha:ka village of Otsirà:ke, represented in the second concept in the following way. From the South-West is a rainwater garden with two paths, representing the river that splits and hugs the island of Tiohtià:ke, the gathering space in the form of a longhouse. This structure is where the fire was and where the people gathered. As Tiohtià:ke has always been a connector for the Peoples around the area, the 10 First Nations and the Inuit are represented by 11 columns, that are each designated to be designed by artists of each respective People and watch over the gathering space. The rainwater garden is semi-humid, changing between dry and wet, depending on the climate, giving it a year-round livelihood and access by a slightly elevated path. The goal with the thick vegetation and added trees is to take a break from the noise and greyness of the city and bring back the serenity that was once there.

This was the preferred and overall chosen concept by the committee. They agreed that this story, being the origin story of the island would be a good first step towards culturally representative spaces on the island. They also enjoyed the simplicity and the closeness to the more natural infrastructure of the design, along with the representation of the nations and the metaphor of the longhouse being where the fire is. Finally, the rainwater garden was attractive for its serene qualities.



Patterns of Parc de l'Encan



Patterns of Tiohtià:ke and Otsirà:ke



Weaving the patterns into each other

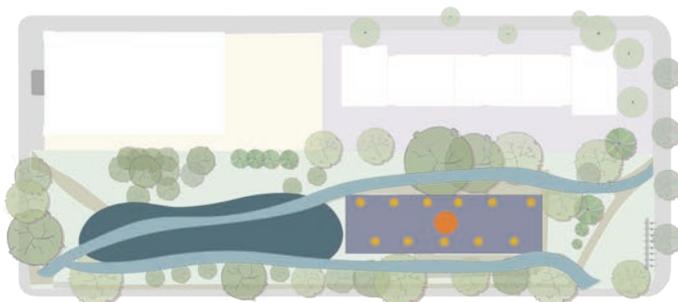


Fig.117 Concept illustration

## Conclusion

This thesis aimed to sew the seeds towards reconciliation through two main aims, the first being to demonstrate the incompatibility of the cityscape with its urban Indigenous demographic. With this conclusion came the aim of understanding Indigenous design and creating a series of recommendations for future endeavors of inclusive and culturally safe designs.

Reconciliation is a process that requires open minds and conscious decisions that aim to elevate all parties involved. The colonization of North America is an on-going phenomenon that has transformed the landscape and impacted its Indigenous people for over four centuries. Today's problems in urban areas lie in the sense of acceptance, representation and belonging of Indigenous people. Montreal, Canada is one of the unceded territories that reflects the reality of colonial narratives and their impacts on relationships of all with each other and their environments.

In the first part of this publication, the reader was led through the colonial history of Canada and the transformation of Montreal's soil, illustrating the erasure of the cultural landscape, Indigenous Peoples and the replacement with imported shapes, structures, materials and usage, in a palimpsest of continual dominance. This narrative has been translated into the now urban metropolitan city, with symbols of oppression, and compositions of space that are incompatible with its Indigenous communities. This was demonstrated with a spectrum of compatibility, created from the results of participatory workshops in collaboration with the INRS and an Indigenous committee.

The spectrum was used then in the second aim, situating many spaces created by Indigenous designers in settler contexts, and identifying the aspects which help create balance in the narratives and representation of the communities involved. With this, it was clear that the solutions are out there and are beneficial to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

The main themes that were frequently seen in all compatible designs were the notion of non-hierarchy, high biodiversity, sustainability, community, and the importance of stories. These themes were translated in the start of a participatory process in the Sud-Ouest Burrough, with the aim of creating a park by 2024, with the urban Indigenous community of the city.

At the end of the day, it's all about creating relationships of acknowledgement and respect, with the aim to create a better future for all. This can be achieved when we listen to the voices of those who have been silenced, and collaborate with them in one good mind. Finally, to create these relationships of respect and inclusivity, we must be knowledgeable in minding the narrative that we portray and the stories we tell in the spaces that impact many people every day. In that sense, we are baking the dough before it turns.



## Reflection

Looking back, it is clear that the subject is much more vast than what was shared in this thesis. Indigenous representation and decolonization through design is an extremely young theme in the world of landscape architecture and environmental design in general. The original aim was to provide a park proposal through Indigenous design led by a participatory process. This however did not have the chance to pan out, as the available theoretical background was so scarce, it became the priority.

How can someone propose a design for Indigenous representation, when the sole idea of understanding the need for it is not understood and recognized by the majority? It was therefore necessary to create this demonstration. Moreover, how can someone evaluate the compatibility of a city with Indigenous people without the data that demonstrates the experience of said people in the context? This then became the pioneering theme: understanding the importance of landscape architecture in the process of reconciliation on colonized lands. This led to the solution theme: what is Indigenous design and how does it translate into the transformation of the landscape? Unfortunately, the given time did not allow for a final design on the part of the author, but it was possible to evaluate a series of Indigenous led designs as well as create a list of recommendations for anyone Indigenous and non-Indigenous who wishes to design in a more holistic and inclusive way, especially in collaboration with Indigenous communities.

The spatial evaluation scale is also highly subjective to the context of Tiohtià:ke, and tailored to the non-Indigenous eye. This was a choice in that the institution in which this was written is academia and the target audience is non-Indigenous, because the first Nations, Inuit and Métis are already aware of the needs and values of their communities. The scale is made as a guide to the overall population, especially designers of academia, to grasp a general idea of the impacts of settler architecture on Native Land, the need for change and the existing proposals for solutions. It is not perfect and it is an on-going process. It is based off of the voices of less than 50 people, although diverse and highly valuable. Because much of the knowledge is shared orally, it takes great efforts to hear the voices of the land. The author is grateful for the few who took precious time out of their busy lives to share what they knew with an open mind.

As time ran out, it was impossible to check with the participants for a final approval of the scale. It is recommended in future publications to do so and to adapt to each group and their wishes.

Although the subject can be triggering and political, it is important to note that it is necessary to address them with openness. The energy put into this production was far from light, and the author is aware that it can be a difficult to take in at certain moments. Things happen, they are not our fault, but they are our responsibility to recognize and repair, so that we can all move forward together in one good mind.





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